

THE  
MYSTERIOUS PENITENT;

OR, THE  
*Norman Chateau.*

~~~~~  
A ROMANCE.

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VOL. II.

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## THE MYSTERIOUS PENITENT.

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### CHAPTER XI.

"If she be false, oh, then Heaven mocks itself;  
"I'll not believe it."

**T**HE Baroness Rohesia, so generally believed to be dead, had been saved by the remorse and fears of the Jew, whom the Baron, instigated by a vindictive jealousy, had suborned to poison her.

The Chevalier Reginald, whose love for Rohesia rendered him watchful of the Baron, had overheard several conversations between him and some other unknown person, by concealing himself in an apartment ad-

joining to the Baron's closet. The moment that the person who enjoyed so much of his brother's confidence left him, he constantly descended as quick as possible by another stair-case, and waited in the hall, in order to meet the confidant and discover who he was, but the object of his curiosity had hitherto eluded his pursuit ; the subject however of their last conversation interested him so deeply, that he determined to wait on the principal stair-case, in sight of the door of the closet. He did so, and saw a person, wrapped up in a cloak, steal round to a private stair-case ; it was then too dark to distinguish his figure ; but the Chevalier guessing that he designed to depart by means of a little postern, which opened upon the cypress walk, he hastened silently after him, and saw him glide along an avenue of pillars, which stood thick, at the bottom of the hall ; he followed him through the cypress walk, into a hollow way, which led from the château to the main road.

When

When he imagined they were at a sufficient distance, not to be overhead in the castle, the Chevalier suddenly sprung upon this miscreant, and grasping his throat, threatened that he would instantly put him to death, unless he made a full confession of what had just passed between him and the Baron.

“Dare not equivocate,” cried Reginald, “I know your crime in part, and nothing but a full confession shall prevent me from sending your guilty soul to hell !”

The Jew, dissatisfied with the reward that the Baron had promised, and feeling moreover some slight compunction, as well as fears of a discovery, was debating with himself, whether he should return to the Baron, and demand a more considerable recompence for this very dangerous service, when he so suddenly and unexpectedly felt himself in the grasp of Reginald. Terrified and trem-

bling, he fell at the feet of the Chevalier, and besought him to spare his life; alleging, in a whining and hypocritical tone, that extreme want and misery, added to the great reward offered him, had overcome the horror which he felt at committing so black a deed; and that at the moment when Reginald had overtaken him, remorse of conscience was working so powerfully in him, that he was debating whether to return and refuse being employed in so cruel and dangerous a business, or sink under the poverty which oppressed him, and die unloaded by so foul a crime.

“Enough of this,” interrupted Reginald; “tell me the particulars.”

The Jew, fixing his eyes upon the shining blade which the Chevalier held over his head, added, “that the poison was to be administered that night in a draught which the physician had prescribed, to  
“compose



"compose the Baroness; when her death  
"would have been attributed to that medi-  
"cine."

"Execrable! But is my brother in pos-  
"session of it?"

"I was going now to procure it for him,  
"Monsieur," replied the Jew.

Reginald was silent; he saw the moment was now arrived that afforded him an opportunity which he had long wished for, and what he had sought to accomplish by various unsuccessful means, of getting Rothesia into his possession. So great a service as that of saving her life, he concluded, would engage her gratitude, and induce her to renew their former correspondence.

The Jew, fearing this silence boded no good to himself, endeavoured to extenuate the enormity of the Baron's conduct, by



saying, he had been well assured that the Lady Rohesia had been false to his bed; and that her life was a sacrifice which he ought to make to his own honour.

“A monster!” exclaimed Reginald, “do murderers talk of honour? Yes,” added he, musing, “her life shall be preserved, and you shall be her preserver. Here,” said the Chevalier, giving him his purse, “let that supply your present necessities; and assure yourself, if I find you faithful, my liberality shall not stop there.”

The Jew was about to speak; but Reginald silenced him, saying, “your professions are useless; it is only your fidelity that can save your life, for I tell you beforehand, that our intelligence in all parts of Europe is so good, that no retirement, however secret, can conceal you from the search and vengeance of a Knight of Malta. Attend to me therefore, and if  
“you

“ you would preserve yourself from unheard  
“ of torments, serve me faithfully.”

The Jew swore, by the soul of Abraham and his own, that he would never betray him.

“ The oaths of a villain,” said Reginald, sternly ; “ are vain, I place no security but  
“ in his fears. Thus then, during my residence in India I possessed myself of a drug,  
“ which will occasion the appearance of  
“ death, by the suspension of all apparent  
“ motion and the cadaverous hue which it  
“ spreads over the body. Come to my  
“ apartment, by the little stair-case, before  
“ you go to the Baron. You shall deliver  
“ him the drug, and declare it to be the  
“ poison which he bargained with you to  
“ procure. We will afterwards remove the  
“ body from the vault, and restore the suspended animation. In a word, Jew, I  
“ love Rohesia, I have long loved her, and  
“ will

"will richly reward you, for being the instrument of putting her into my power."

The Jew, though he saw that instead of one villain as an employer, he had now become the agent of two, determined to make his advantage of both; and rejoicing to find himself in safety, bound himself by a thousand oaths to be secret and discreet; and expressed himself overjoyed to escape the commission of so great a crime, which, he repeatedly assured Reginald, nothing but the actual prospect of starving could ever have induced him even to think of.

Every thing succeeded according to the Chevalier's wish. The potion was administered by the Baron to his wife, whose fears induced him to bury her with all possible dispatch; to which he was still further instigated by the Jew, who hinted to him, in his dressing room, on the evening preceding her interment, that he was fearful the effects

effects of the poison might appear ; and it was those words which Agnes had overheard, as she was passing the door, and afterwards reported to Madame de Villeverde.

Reginald, assisted by the Jew, removed the Baroness from the vault at midnight, and placed her in a carriage which waited for them near the château ; his own servant had been sent forward to provide relays of horses at all necessary places. Reginald, in vain, pressed the Jew to accompany him ; but that Israelite, solemnly assuring him of his fidelity, pretended an attachment to his present situation ; where, in truth, he had views of extorting a further reward from the Baron as the price of his secrecy respecting the Baroness. Reginald saw through his motives ; but as he perceived, at the same time, that they were likely to contribute to his own security, as well as the advantage of the Jew, he left him with that secret contempt, which one villain (however ridi-



culous it may be) often feels towards another.

Thus Rohesia, who owed her life to the pretended love, but in reality to the lust of Reginald, while her hypocritical husband pompously mourned the death of his wife, found herself in safety at Paris.

"Imagine my surprise, my dear Julien," said that lady, as she related these particulars to her son, "upon opening my eyes to find myself in a little mean apartment poorly furnished, and to see Reginald applying vinegar to my nostrils. I was too weak to ask any questions, but my looks were, I believe, sufficiently expressive; for the Chevalier said, as in reply to them, "Be composed, my dear Rohesia, I will tell you all the dreadful secret when you are better. The people who were with him, gave me some weak liquid, which I swallowed with difficulty, and soon sunk again into the same



“ same unnatural sleep which the power of  
“ Reginald’s drug had occasioned.

“ In this manner, almost always insensi-  
“ ble, as he afterwards informed me, I tra-  
“ velled through France, and arrived at  
“ Marseilles, where, by means of medicines  
“ which were administered to me, after  
“ some time, I recovered my strength and  
“ my faculties ; when Reginald explained to  
“ me the cause of my being there, and the  
“ important service he had done me.”

“ But could you, Madam,” said Julien,  
in a mournful tone of reproach, “ willingly  
“ consent to live in such a manner with my  
“ father’s brother ?”

“ The resentment which I see gathering  
“ upon your brow,” replied Rohesia, with a  
dignified air, “ is as worthy your character,  
“ my noble Julien, as it is unworthy mine,  
“ but it will be far surpassed by your sur-  
prise,

“prise, when I tell you, that this Reginald,  
“to whom I felt so grateful for his generous  
“preservation of my life from the base at-  
“tempt of my merciless husband, proposed  
“to me to pass my days with him, and, as  
“he called it, renew our former correspon-  
“dence which had now for so many years  
“been interrupted.

“Your indignation is not less than was  
“my surprise,” continued Rohesia, observ-  
ing the workings of Montalville’s counte-  
nance; “I demanded the meaning of that  
“expression?”

“Cruel Rohesia,” replied the Chevalier,  
“you know I have long loved you; recollect  
“what formerly passed between us in the  
“chamber of my page Marco, at the end  
“of the north gallery in the château de  
“Beauval.”

“Still at a loss to comprehend him, I de-  
“manded

“manded an explanation with the utmost  
“earnestness. He left me without reply,  
“but returning a moment after, put into  
“my hands several letters, written in characters very much resembling my own.  
“In those letters I seemed to have consented to his desires, and to have granted him several meetings in the chamber which he had alluded to, upon condition that these assignations should always be in the dark, our conversations held in a whisper, and that he should never upon any other occasion presume to mention or even hint at his passion, by paying me particular attentions before my husband or any other persons.

“The last of these letters asserted that I was with child by him, and earnestly entreated him to leave the château, as his presence continually endangered my safety.

“Imagine

“ Imagine my amazement, dear Julien !  
“ it was too strong to be counterfeit ; Regi-  
“ nald himself was astonished at it. I re-  
“ peatedly and earnestly assured him that  
“ the letters, notwithstanding there being so  
“ near a resemblance to my hand, were all  
“ forged ; I represented to him, that if he  
“ gave himself time to consider how I was  
“ circumstanced, he would perceive that it  
“ was impossible for me, if I had been dis-  
“ posed to grant him the favours which he  
“ boasted to have received from me ; and, if  
“ I had granted them, it was unnatural to  
“ imagine, that I should wish to send a fa-  
“ voured lover to undertake an office in In-  
“ dia, a country from which it was very pro-  
“ bable he would never return. Numberless  
“ other circumstances which I adduced in  
“ proof of an innocence which I incessantly  
“ asserted, seemed, at length, to stagger  
“ his credulity, and he owned at last, that  
“ my constantly appearing to misunderstand  
“ him, when he hinted his wish for a private  
“ meeting



"meeting before he left France, had much  
"surprised him ; but as his page Marco, the  
"only confidant of the amour, had left his  
"service without assigning any reason, and  
"whose retreat he could not discover, there  
"was no other person in the château whom  
"he dared venture to entrust with so dan-  
"gerous a secret."

Julien's countenance was suffused with a blush of doubting joy, as his mother proceeded in the developement of a mystery, which had occasioned him so many pangs ; Rohesia perceived it, and smiling affectionately upon her son, she proceeded.

"Absence, he said, had weakened his  
"passion for me, but by no means eradicated it ; I was continually in his thoughts,  
"and my figure perpetually before his eyes ;  
"and upon his return from India, after a separation of so many years, upon our first  
"interview he became again the victim of  
"his

“ his guilty passion, in spite of all his efforts  
“ to the contrary. He confessed to me,  
“ that finding I avoided any particular con-  
“ versations, (which I made a point of doing  
“ on account of the Baron’s jealous disposi-  
“ tion, not with him only, but with every  
“ body) he was continually employing him-  
“ self in various schemes to get me into  
“ his power, and carry me off from the châ-  
“ teau, not doubting but that a woman, who  
“ had once been upon such terms as he  
“ supposed me to have been with him,  
“ would rejoice to escape from a surly hus-  
“ band, and live with her lover.

“ Strong as these proofs appeared against  
“ me, I at last believed that I had succeeded  
“ in convincing him of my innocence ; and  
“ I besought him to let me retire into a con-  
“ vent, where I designed to take the veil,  
“ for I could not think of returning to a  
“ husband who had attempted to destroy  
“ me ; and as I had no relations to protect  
“ me,

"me, that, I thought, would be an asylum  
"the most proper of all others, at any rate,  
"for the present."

"You had me for a protector, my dear  
"mother," interrupted Julien.

Rohesia bowed, and proceeded. "I  
"could perceive," said she, "in the midst  
"of my requests and remonstrances, which  
"I daily and hourly repeated, that the Che-  
"valier still considered me as an object of  
"desire, whom he did not chuse to part with.  
"I besought him to permit me to write to  
"you; he granted me that liberty, as it  
"appeared to me, too readily. I wrote you  
"several letters, which he himself insisted  
"upon taking charge of, and solemnly as-  
"sured me, he had sent them under cover  
"to a friend of his own, who would deliver  
"them to you; for," added he, "if your  
"writing should discover to the Baron that  
"you

"you are still living, he will not rest till he has sacrificed you to his own safety."

"Long and vainly I hoped a reply ; your apparent cruelty in abandoning your mother to her unhappy fate, added a double weight to my load of misery ; and my existence became an hourly burden to me. Reginald, fatigued at length by my prayers and tears, consented that I should go into a convent, but not in France ; he knew an Abbess, he said, at Palermo who was a woman of rank, and amiable manners, and who, he did not doubt would receive me, as his sister, without farther questions ; particularly as he designed I should pay a most liberal pension, the only method, added he, of conciliating nuns, and ensuring their respect. I entreated to be spared such a banishment from my native country ; but he made my compliance the indispensable condition of bringing you to me, I

"la



he last acquiesced, and he accordingly con-  
 ducted me to Sicily, and placed me in  
 the convent he had mentioned ; where I  
 was received under the title of Madame la  
 Comtesse Dupont, his widowed sister ; and,  
 at my desire, he soon after took his leave,  
 in order to return to Beauval. My bro-  
 ther, said he, notwithstanding my vow of  
 poverty, knows that I am very rich, and  
 as he is anxious to secure my wealth to  
 Julien, he will make no scruple of grant-  
 ing instantly the request I design to make  
 him, that Julien may make the tour of  
 Italy with me ; and, you know his silly  
 vanity, he will rejoice to get rid of a fine  
 handsome youth, to whom he is constantly  
 reduced to the mortification of acting as  
 a foil. Reginald, having uttered this  
 charitable comment upon his brother's  
 foibles, left me with these remarkable  
 words :

" When we have our son with us, Rohe-  
 " sia,

“sia, I hope you will no longer refuse to  
“life with his father.”

“After the departure of Reginald, the  
“nun Camilla, with whom I had contracted  
“an intimate friendship, and had confided  
“in some measure my real situation, bor-  
“rowed this villa of one of her relations,  
“and obtained permission to leave her con-  
“vent for some time, in order to take the  
“benefit of the baths in the neighbourhood,  
“which her physicians had prescribed as  
“necessary to the restoration of her health.  
“We had left our villa, and walked forth  
“together, to enjoy the charming coolness  
“of the morning ; and in repeating my mis-  
“fortunes, had wandered unawares too far  
“into the wood, when you came, my dear  
“son, so providentially to our rescue.”

Julien, overjoyed to find his mother inno-  
cent altogether of the infamy which had been  
imputed to her, proceeded to inform her of

Reginald's

Reginald's death, of the confession of his uncle communicated to him by the Chevalier Sainville, and of the Baron's having renounced and banished him.

The good Chevalier, who had been present during this conference, interrupting him, bitterly lamented his own imprudence in communicating the confession to Julien; and while he informed Rohesia of the melancholy effect it had had upon him, all her mother's fondness was awakened at the deplorable image of her child bereft of his understanding; but when the Chevalier related the perils they had encountered in their shipwreck, the Baroness entreated him to desist; and clasping her arms about the neck of her son, burst into tears.

Julien sought to comfort and compose his mother, by drawing pictures of future felicity, and restoration to the Baron.

"My father's grief," added he, "was too  
"violent

"violent to be insincere, and I verily believe your supposed death was the contrivance of the execrable Reginald alone. You shall be restored, my dear mother, to your rank, and I doubt not, to your former happiness."

CHAP.

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## CHAP. XII.

" Confess'd from yonder slow extinguish'd Clouds,  
" All Ether softening, sober Evening takes  
" Her wonted station in the middle Air;  
" A thousand Shadows at her beck."

THE Count di Rozarno had left England with Lord Terrasfort and Ludovico. The Count, when he first saw that youth with Lady Petersvale, at Woodbourn Dell, became preposessed in his favour with a sentiment, which at that time he thought arose from the gentle elegance of Ludovico's manners, and an interesting air of melancholy which spread itself over his fine features; but a more intimate knowledge of that youth's good qualities confirmed his attachment to

him, and a secret expectation that he should eventually discover him to be his near relation, bound him still closer to Ludovico with the affectionate friendship of a parent.

Sir Frederic Plume, who had also accompanied Lord Terrasfort from England, and who had proffered his services to assist the fortune of Ludovico, finding these pretended services disregarded by that youth, now quitted the party, hoping to find in the climes of Italy, companions more suitable to his taste and character.

Rozarno, from all the circumstances of Ludovico's birth and name, hoped to discover in him the son of his long concealed sister Valeria. While Lord Terrasfort and his suite proceeded to Naples, Rozarno arrived at his palace in Venice, and immediately waited upon the old Marchesa di Riazzi, with whose family Valeria di Rozarno had formerly been upon terms of the strictest intimacy.

macy. The Marchesa, as soon as she understood the design of his visit, declared herself altogether ignorant of the retreat of Signora Valeria, but said, she believed her daughter Camilla might possibly be acquainted with it.

“ Camilla,” added the Marchesa, “ has  
“ become a nun in a convent at Palermo, of  
“ which my sister is the superior, but I am  
“ by no means certain, Signor,” continued  
the old lady, “ that my daughter will, or  
“ indeed is at liberty to discover her friend’s  
“ retirement, which has so long been stu-  
“ diously concealed. To me, she has ever  
“ kept it an inviolable secret ; alledging,  
“ that as Valeria never designed to appear  
“ again in the world, or be seen by any of  
“ her family, it would be cruel to disturb  
“ her present repose, by putting it in their  
“ power to molest her. I believe,” said she,  
yawning, as if fatigued of the subject, “ she  
“ has taken the veil in some French con-  
B 2 “ vent,

“vent, and the last time Camilla mentioned  
“her to me, she said her health had been  
“sometime declining, and she expected  
“death would ere long put an end to her  
“remorse and her life ; therefore, my Lord,  
“why revive your disgrace ? since of course  
“the young woman can never appear again  
“at Venice.”

The Count, disgusted with the inhumanity of the old Maarchesa, which, far from discouraging him, increased his desire of discovering his sister, and embracing her before she died ; demanded the name of her sister’s convent, and took his leave.

Rozarno, eager to gain the wished for intelligence, immediately followed Lord Terrasfort to Naples, whence he was attended to Sicily by Ludovico, and upon demanding admittance to Camilla at her aunt’s convent, had been directed to the villa.

Camilla,



Camilla, with whom the Count in his youth had been something more than a common acquaintance, lamented sincerely to him, that he should have taken the trouble to come so far to no purpose, but she assured him, that she had solemnly pledged herself never to discover to any mortal the retirement of Valeria.

“But, Signora,” pleaded the Count, “I believe I have discovered her child. (The nun started.) You would not surely,” continued Rozarno, observing her emotion, “prevent the young man’s being acknowledged by his mother’s brother, when perhaps your testimony is the only means of ascertaining his relationship. Unacquainted as I have ever been with the circumstances which led to my unhappy sister’s flight from her family, yet the extraordinary coincidence of circumstances relative to this youth, but above all, his

B 3

“strong

“strong resemblance to Valeria, lead me  
“to believe that he is certainly her son.”

The Count then related to Camilla the particulars of his being found by Mr. Dormer, his name, and those of the peasants whom the child called his parents; and he concluded, by assuring the nun, that far from retaining any remains of resentment against his sister, he longed for nothing more ardently, than to have her restored to him; the manners of Ludovico continually reminded him of Valeria, and had revived, in the most lively manner, the affection he had borne his sister. “Let the dear Valeria  
“return, Signora,” continued the Count,  
“she shall not find in me the stern avenger  
“of a dishonoured family, but an affectionate brother ready to pardon her  
“errors, and to clasp the poor penitent to  
“his bosom, soothe her sorrows, and study  
“to reconcile her to herself.”

The

The nun shook her head.

“ She shall reside,” added Rozarno, undisturbed and unintruded upon at my palace in Venice, or at any one of my villas, and nobody shall presume to approach her without her own express permission.” The Count was proceeding to enforce his request; but Camilla interrupted him.

“ My Lord,” said she, gravely, “ our poor Valeria, by a long course of penitence, such as our holy church enjoins, has, I hope, obtained the pardon of heaven.”

“ Good God !” exclaimed the Count “ Valeria is then dead.”

“ No,” calmly replied the nun, “ she is not yet dead ; but she writes me, that her health rapidly declines, and she hopes shortly to find that peace in the bosom of  
B 4 “ her

“ her Saviour, which the madness of youth-  
“ ful passion has deprived her of upon  
“ earth. You will be surprised, my Lord,  
“ when I inform you, that she has lately  
“ seen you by accident.”

“ When, where ?” cried the Count,  
“ seen me, and not reveal herself !”

“ Hard was the struggle,” resumed the  
nun, “ between sisterly affection, and con-  
“ scious propriety ; Valeria saw you, my  
“ Lord, where to have revealed herself,  
“ would have covered her with shame, and  
“ you with dishonour ; she sacrificed her  
“ own feelings not to wound the honour of  
“ her family more deeply.”

“ Ah, Signora Camilla !” replied the  
Count, “ how cruel is this cautious con-  
“ cealment ; you still look upon me as an  
“ implacable brother ; what shall I say to  
“ convince you.”

“ Nothing,”



"Nothing," interrupted the nun; "I am convinced, my Lord, that you would kindly receive again your repentant sister."

"Heaven knows how kindly!" cried Rozarno.

"But my promise to Valeria," rejoined the nun, "is sacred, and I cannot dispense with it, until I receive her consent to discover the place of her retreat. I believe myself however at liberty, my Lord, and I think circumstances now compel me to declare, that your unhappy sister had a son by the French Cavalier with whom she quitted Venice."

"And you believe that Ludovico is that child?"

"I would willingly believe so, my Lord; I cannot relate the singularly unfortunate circumstances of Valeria's attachment to the Frenchman; let it be sufficient to

“say, that she had a son, who was born at  
“Marseilles, and entrusted to my care,  
“whom I brought into Italy, and gave in  
“charge to a woman that had been my  
“own nurse. This person lived in a situa-  
“tion answering exactly to that described  
“by Mr. Dormer, whose humanity ought  
“not to have gone so far as to kidnap a  
“child.”

“Pardon me, Signora,” cried the Count,  
“you do that gentleman a great injustice;  
“the child was ready to perish with hunger.  
“Mr. Dormer and his family were about to  
“embark immediately on board their vessel;  
“from the lonely situation of the cottage,  
“there were no means of enquiry; no other  
“alternative than that of carrying the child  
“with them, or leaving it to perish.”

The nun, whom a long separation from  
family connexions, and the dull routine of  
a monastic life, had almost reduced to a  
state

state of apathy, and left but slightly sensible of the miseries and calamities of that world from which she was excluded, appeared little moved by the minute and affecting description, which Rozarno proceeded to give her, of the child's distressed situation. The theft Mr. Dormer had committed dwelt alone upon her mind, that was a breach of a positive article of the decalogue, which, in her idea, no circumstances could excuse. She allowed the Count to go on in his justification of Mr. Dormer, and in praise of his humanity, as long as he thought proper; and when she perceived he had done, she coldly proceeded to give her own reasons for thinking Ludovico was the child of Valeria.

“At the time the child was stolen,” said Camilla, (laying a very strong emphasis on that word) “old Carlo was in Sicily, arranging some affairs for me here. My nurse Maria had gone into a little wood,

“ behind the cottage, in search, I suppose,  
“ of something for her fire; she was there  
“ seized with an apoplexy, and found dead  
“ by her husband, on his return, at the dis-  
“ tance, as he concluded, of two days;  
“ during which interval, no attention could  
“ have been paid to the child. As soon as  
“ Carlo came to me with this information,  
“ I took every possible step to recover the  
“ child, but without success. Valeria her-  
“ self was expected in the spring to take  
“ him from the nurse, and place him near  
“ her in France. To prevent the melan-  
“ choly disappointment which she must  
“ have undergone, through the villany of  
“ that English heretic having stolen her  
“ child, and to save her from torturing  
“ anxiety, I wrote to her, saying, that her  
“ child had died suddenly. Poor Valeria  
“ called it a dispensation of Providence;  
“ and meekly resigned herself to all its chas-  
“ tisements. In the mean time, though  
“ hopelessly, I continued my enquiries, and  
“ offered



“ offered rewards, to the utmost of my  
“ power, to any one who should produce  
“ the child, knowing that Valeria would  
“ readily pardon my having deceived her as  
“ to his death, in consideration of my mo-  
“ tive, in case I should be so fortunate as  
“ to restore him.”

Rozarno eagerly began an eulogy on her tender regard to his sister's feelings; but Camilla, motioning him to be silent, called to a servant who passed the silk awning, under which they were sitting.

“ Go,” said she, “ and beg the Signior  
“ Ludovico to come here.” The nun, who felt herself contaminated by the presence of so many men, wished to conclude the business, and get rid of them.

Ludovico approached, smiling and bowing to Camilla's veil, for her face was totally invisible.

The

The nun, approaching him as she would an animal whom one loathes, or is afraid to touch, looked for some time steadfastly upon him, examining every lineament of his countenance with more deliberation and exactness than was perhaps absolutely necessary. Ludovico's countenance, which generally wore an air of melancholy, brightened up with smiles as he was patiently undergoing this critical survey. The nun, who saw much better through her veil than he could, felt the sparkling glances of Ludovico's eyes beginning to thaw the ice, which so many winters of chastity had collected round her heart, and give birth to sentiments which she found pleasing enough, but dreaded the consequences of, in the fatiguing acts of penance and mortification which she foresaw they would occasion her. In spite of these reflections, however, the fair vestal, determined to make the most of so rare an opportunity of examining a pretty fellow, and having prolonged her survey to  
the

the very utmost, ventured to draw a little nearer, under pretence of searching for a small mole, which the child had upon his right ear, which, when she thought proper to discover, she solemnly droned out, as if giving absolution,

“ I pronounce that you are the son of  
“ Valeria di Rozarno, and consequently  
“ the nephew of the Count.”

Rozarno embraced the examined, and declared, with equal joy and sincerity, his happiness in having discovered so amiable a relation.

Camilla, in the mean time, either disgusted, or probably too much moved by the testimonies of their affection which these relations gave each other, and particularly the tears and joy of Ludovico, retired into the saloon, and was leaving them, but Ludovico calling after her, besought her to  
compleat

compleat her goodness, by telling him where to find his mother, and who was his father ?

The nun, not very sorry to have an opportunity of returning, declared that it was impossible for her to do either one or the other.

“ Tell me at least, Signora,” cried Ludovico, falling at her feet, and embracing her knees, “ if you are my mother ?”

“ Me !” cried Camilla, with horror, “ do you know, young man, that I am a nun ?”

Ludovico besought her pardon, and drawing a little picture from his bosom, entreated her to tell him if those were the effigies of his mother ?

The picture being attached to a ribband  
round



round the neck of Ludovico, the nun found it necessary to draw extremely near him, in order to take the picture under her veil, preparatory to its examination ; having under the protection of her veil, contemplated that and Ludovico as long as she thought proper ; she said,

“ Ah, it is indeed my poor Valeria, in all her youthful beauty ; and this on the other side,” added she, “ is the portrait of your father, drawn by herself. The last time your mother saw you, she bound these about your neck, and begged that I would always preserve them there ; but that heretic, in defiance of one of the most positive commands of our holy religion, stole both you and the picture.”

Ludovico looked upon the Count with surprise ; Rozarno nodded to him to be silent, and the nun added,

“ If

“ If you will remain at Palermo until I  
“ receive your mother’s permission to dis-  
“ close the place of her retirement, you can  
“ return to France with the Chevalier de  
“ Montalville and the Lady Rohesia, to  
“ whom your mother is very well known by  
“ another name ; but I hope, although I  
“ must at the same time confess so much  
“ is not to be expected from an education  
“ among Protestants, the worst of all here-  
“ tics, yet, if you have been properly in-  
“ structed in the duty of a child to its pa-  
“ rent, you will take no steps to force a  
“ secret from your mother, which she has  
“ been for so many years anxious to con-  
“ ceal.”

Ludovico replied that he would implicitly  
obey all the nun’s directions.

“ I am satisfied,” said Camilla, “ and will  
“ lose no time in rendering you this service  
“ which you appear,” added she, in some  
wha

what a softer tone, "very well to deserve;" and courtesying to the Count, she left the apartment.

Rozarno was vexed at the nun's pertinacity, but however felt himself bound by the promise which Ludovico had given, and to which his making no opposition was a tacit consent, to make no enquiries concerning his sister's situation of Madame de Beauval, until her letters should arrive, and Camilla should no longer be bound by engagements of secrecy.

The amiable Rohesia taking upon herself to preside at the villa, left the nun at liberty to pursue her devotions and her exercises without interruption.

Camilla herself was far from having a hard heart, but being a precise devotee, felt herself scandalized at being continually in the presence of so many men; she had however

ever too much natural politeness, as well as friendship for the Baroness, to which might be added, a kind of maternal, or some such affection, for Ludovico, to hinder her desire that they would depart; and when occasionally she joined in their little party, she selected the old Chevalier de Sainville as her particular companion; he was of a religious order as well as herself, which abated her scruples of conversing with him.

Rohesia, who was convinced that the nun was not governed by her caprice, but by her principles, seldom importuned her to appear except at their evening concerts; then indeed her fine voice, her Italian taste, and her imitable execution, all of which she exerted very willingly in the performance of sacred music, rendered her a most valuable addition.

Upon one of these occasions, on a calm evening



evening, as they were seated together in an orange grove near the villa, while Rohesia was searching some music books, in order to make a selection for their evening performance, of which she was always arbitress, Camilla struck her lute, and began to sing, with infinite pathos and expression, a tender Italian air; every one was ravished with her performance, but the nun herself wished only for the praise of Ludovico.

"Good God!" exclaimed Montalville, "how often have I heard that interesting Italian, Madame Valini, sing that same song to me and Adeline."

Camilla, who had not foreseen this consequence, and influenced by her tenderness for Ludovico, now heartily repented of having deviated, in this instance, from her usual custom of singing sacred music only, at the beginnings of a passion for that calt, added to a little female vanity in shewing

shewing that her excellence in music was not confined solely to the pieces performed in convents, had led her to take a step in the eagerness of exhibiting her accomplishments, which it was now too late to retract or to prevent the consequences of.

The Count di Rozarno did not neglect this opportunity; he questioned Juliet closely respecting the Italian lady whom he thought so interesting.

Montalville, observing the nun making signs to him to be silent, answered reservedly.

But Rohesia, who knew of no reasons for holding her tongue, was surprised at her son's reserve, and thought it absurd. "My Lord," said the Baroness, "Madame Valini is the widow of an Italian officer who has lived for some years with me

" friend

"friend, Isabelle Countess of Villeverde, in  
"Normandy."

Rozarno, who would not see Camilla's  
entreating motions to make no further en-  
quiries, snatched his sister's picture out of  
Ludovico's bosom, and presented it to Ro-  
hesia.

"Yes," said the Baroness, "it is Va-  
lini's picture;" and giving it to Julien,  
she added, "what an admirable little por-  
trait of Reginald too! but," continued  
she, "how came these two persons placed  
together, who never had any acquaintance  
with each other?" She looked upon Lu-  
dovico, who was covered with confusion,  
but made no reply.

Rozarno demanded of the Baroness, who  
the picture of the Cavalier represented.

"My husband's brother," replied Rohe-  
sia.

sia, " who was called the Chevalier Reginald  
" de Montalville."

" Pardon my curiosity, Madame," resumed the Count ; " has the Chevalier then  
" some other title at present ?"

" He is dead, my Lord," replied Rohesia.

Ludovico sighed ; and the nun, crossing herself, muttered, " Fate has then overtaken  
" one of the guilty ;" and finding she could no longer prevent a discovery of Valeria, hastily retreated into the villa.

Rozarno, desiring Ludovico to follow Julien, who had wandered with a guitar in his hand down towards the shore, and having begged Rohesia's attention, related to her all that had passed between himself and Camilla respecting Ludovico.

The



The Baroness replied, "that notwithstanding Camilla's assertion, she thought it impossible Ludovico should be the son of Reginald; she hoped however," she added, "to prevail upon the nun to lay aside her scruples, and explain a mystery, which was already so far revealed by accident, as to make her concealment of the particulars altogether useless to Madame Valini, in case that Italian was in reality Rozarno's sister."

Rozarno bowed his thanks; and Rohesia, following Camilla to her apartment, urged every argument, which the esteem she had conceived for the Count and Ludovico, and her own curiosity respecting Reginald, supplied her with, to induce the nun to give her the information which she requested.

Camilla preserved for a long time an obstinate silence. At length, lifting up her veil, and turning her expressive eyes full

upon those of Rohesia ; she demanded,  
“ Are you a Christian ? A Catholic Chris-  
“ tian ? ”

The Baroness replied, “ Yes, Camilla ;  
“ can you doubt it ? ”

The nun, not regarding her questions,  
added, with increased solemnity, “ True  
Christians can forgive injuries ; can you ? ”

Rohesia, very much surprised, answered,  
“ Yes certainly ; I am not vindictive. ”

“ Forgiveness of injuries, ” resumed the  
nun, “ is the indispensable condition of sal-  
“ vation. ”

“ I know it well, ” replied Rohesia ; “ and  
“ I can forgive, as I hope to be forgiven. ”

“ Injuries ! ” rejoined Camilla, looking  
steadily upon her, “ which involve crimes  
“ of

“ of the blackest die ; injuries ! which have  
“ given a fatal stab to your reputation, and  
“ which have occasioned all the misfortunes  
“ that you have met with.”

“ Amazing !” exclaimed Rohesia, “ who  
“ can have borne such deadly malice against  
“ me ?”

“ Nobody,” replied the nun ; “ it was  
“ not malice, but love, or more properly  
“ madness, which has occasioned them ;  
“ but say, Lady, can you forgive such in-  
“ juries ?”

“ Ought I to forgive them ?” demanded  
the Baroness. “ Unless you explain your-  
“ self, Camilla, I am unable to judge.”

“ It is your duty ; holy charity commands  
“ it.”

“ I can then—I do—I will forgive them !”

exclaimed Rohesia, impatient to learn what these injuries could be.

“Amiable lady,” said Camilla, softened by the fervour with which Rohesia pronounced her pardon; “Heaven will reward such Christian, such noble generosity!”

Rozarno, impatient to know the result of Rohesia’s negotiation, now entered to them, and began to apologise for his intrusion.

Camilla waved her hand for him to be seated. “Valeria di Rozarno, Signora, is  
“the authoress of these injuries, of which  
“your amiable virtue has induced you to  
“pronounce the forgiveness; it is she, who  
“without malice to you, has defamed your  
“character, and estranged the affection of  
“your husband, by affording him grounds  
“for jealousy; it is she, who has endan-  
“gered your life, and driven out your son  
“an exile from his father’s house, and his  
“country;



“country; it is she, in a word, who has  
“caused so many misfortunes so unde-  
“servedly to happen to yourself, and to  
“the Chevalier your son.

“You remember, my Lord,” continued  
Camilla, turning to the Count, “that the  
“Marchese di Reazzi, my brother, upon  
“occasion of his marriage, assembled a  
“great number of persons at our palace at  
“Venice, during the carnival; among these  
“foreigners, was the Chevalier de Montal-  
“ville. Valeria saw, and loved him; the  
“Chevalier, engrossed by other pursuits,  
“scarcely noticed her at all, and, I believe,  
“did not even guess at her passion for  
“him; but this neglect, so far from extin-  
“guishing her passion, (so perverse is that  
“particular species of madness, which fools  
“call love) encreased it beyond all bounds;  
“in a word, Valeria quitted Venice before the  
“Chevalier, and contrived to get herself  
“hired to him, in the disguise of a page,

“ in Piedmont. Montalville was then going  
“ to the château de Beauval, with the Baron  
“ and his newly married lady”—

“ Holy Mary !” exclaimed Rohesia, “ I  
“ now very well remember the extraordinary  
“ beauty of the page Marco, and compre-  
“ hend entirely”—

“ Attend,” said Camilla. “ Valeria saw  
“ that the Chevalier was in love with his  
“ sister-in-law. One would have imagined  
“ that such a discovery would have been  
“ sufficient to discourage her, and render  
“ her lover odious in her eyes. But thus it  
“ is,” said the nun, crossing herself, while  
Julien and Ludovico were passing, at some  
distance, before the window ; “ thus, when  
“ once we give the reins to passion, we are  
“ hurried on in spite of ourselves, and fu-  
“ riously embrace our ruin. Valeria con-  
“ trived to inspire the Chevalier with false  
“ hopes, by misrepresenting every part of  
“ the

“ the Lady Rohesia’s conduct, and forging  
“ letters from her to the Chevalier ; by  
“ these means she appointed meetings,  
“ where she substituted herself in the place  
“ of the Baroness. She was at length with  
“ child ; it was then that terror and repen-  
“ tance began to seize her. She endea-  
“ voured, in Rohesia’s name, to remove Re-  
“ ginald from the château, intending, when  
“ they were at a distance, to confess the  
“ whole affair. Finding that Reginald still  
“ lingered there, she fled to Marseilles, and  
“ concealed herself in the house of a young  
“ Italian lady, of our joint acquaintance,  
“ who was settled there. I demanded per-  
“ mission of my mother to visit this friend,  
“ and did, for your sister, Count, all that  
“ friendship required of me. I received the  
“ child, and the penitent herself retired into  
“ a convent ; from which, hearing the Che-  
“ valier was gone to his government in India,  
“ she accompanied the Countess de Ville-

“verde and her infant daughter into Nor-mandy. And now, my Lord,” added the nun, “I claim your promise of seeking and receiving the poor penitent, and no longer oppose your desire of going to France.”

Madame de Beauval saw in this account, a full explanation of the mystery which had so long bewildered her, and did not doubt but that Valeria, when she should understand the misfortunes that she had occasioned her, would have the generosity to vindicate her fame to her husband, whom she now began to regard in a more favourable light, and to entertain doubts of Reginald's accusations against him, which she attributed to the necessity there was for assigning some strong reasons for carrying her off in so extraordinary a manner. Full of these reflections, Rohesia looked forward impatiently to being restored to her family, her rank, and her former tranquil life at Beauval.

The



The Count and Ludovico were equally impatient to revisit France; and Montalville existed but on the hope of finding Adeline unchanged, and being united to her.

The good old Chevalier Sainville, who appeared the affectionate father of the party, undertook to procure a vessel, in order to transport them from Palermo to Marseilles, as the most expeditious method of reaching the château de Beauval, where they were all bent upon going, as it was believed Madame de Villeverde was, by that time, returned to Normandy. And Rohesia insisted that the Count and Ludovico should be her guests, during their residence in France.

When every thing thing was prepared for their voyage, the nun, took leave of Rohesia with as much affection as one woman

can bear another, shed a shower of tears in Ludovico's bosom, and returned to her convent with half a heart, making Ludovico promise that he would come again to Palermo when Valeria returned into Italy.

CHAP.

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## CHAP. XIII.

" In Spring the Fields, in Autumn Hills I love ;  
" At Morn the Plains, at Noon the shady Grove ;  
" But *Julien* always : absent from *his* sight,  
" Nor Plains at Morn, nor Groves at Noon delight."

ADELINE, at the château de Villeverde, drooped in melancholy despondency. Julien, her beloved Julien ! was not returned. The moments which she had so anxiously counted until the day fixed for that return, had long, long been passed : her lover did not appear, nor inform her of the reasons which had protracted his stay at Marseilles. Lost in conjecture and consumed by inward distress, she wandered among the groves of the château, the victim of vague fears and

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harassing

harassing uncertainties. There were moments when despair led her to contemplate her Julien in his grave ; the supposition of his death was too bitter to be entertained for a moment, and when her mind glanced upon that thought, she struck the chords of her lute, and sang some soothing strains, which the Baroness de Beauval had composed, and taught her.

Adeline looked forward to the hope of consolation, by soon having her mother with her at Villeverde, but in that hope she was disappointed. Isabelle wrote to inform her, that Lady Petersvale had been attacked by a severe indisposition, which rendered it impossible for her to come to France for some time, and confined herself almost entirely in that lady's chamber. She concluded her letter, by saying, that the Baron was making the tour of England and Wales ; and that she was in daily expectation of letters from the Chevalier de Sainville, to whom she had  
written



written to enquire after Julien ; “ therefore  
“ arm yourself with patience, my dear girl,  
“ every thing, I dare engage, will conclude  
“ as you would wish ; there are circum-  
“ stances brought to light, which have put  
“ the Baron entirely in my power, and you  
“ have no longer any thing to fear from his  
“ opposition.”

Adeline, who knew nothing of Reginald's confession, and to whom Julien had spoken by halves, and her mother always ambiguously, felt herself horribly bewildered. She could perceive something extraordinary must have happened to convert the Baron's former tenderness for his son, into his present aversion, which she had observed break out upon several occasions, during her stay at Petersyale. Her own reflections upon this mystery were incessant, and equally unsatisfactory ; to Valini it was in vain to apply, the Italian now becoming more and more reserved every day, was seldom seen before dinner,

dinner, and still more seldom entered into any conversation when she was seen ; and seemed rapidly sinking under her own secret sorrows.

Still Adeline, whenever Valini afforded her a few moments conversation, having her thoughts entirely engrossed by Julien's absence, hardly ever introduced any other subject, which naturally led her to speak of the rest of the Baron's family. Upon those occasions, at the name of Rohesia, Valini sometimes interrupted her, by exclaiming, " Dear injured saint, forgive me ; look down from thy blest abode upon my penitent, my broken heart ; whisper holy consolation to my wounded spirit."

Adeline, who had no clue to lead her to comprehend the cause of these apostrophes, forbore to make any remark upon them to her. She knew Valini never appeared to think favourably of the Baroness, but it appeared

peared impossible she could have done Roesia any injury ; and she therefore attributed these exclamations to the disorder of her unhappy friend's mind, which often occasioned her to talk very incoherently, and without any evident meaning. And while Adeline pathetically lamented the absence of her lover, Valini, in her solemn manner, would address her with strong admonitions to struggle against a passion so terrible in its effects as that of love.

“ Look on me,” said the fair Italian ; “ I once was young, was lovely, was noble, and admired. An hundred youths, amiable as Julien, strove for the possession of this heart ; it then beat strong with health and joy ; now,” added she, placing Adeline's hand upon her bosom, “ how feebly !—the tide of life is ebbing fast ; I soon shall close my eyes for ever, and the unhappy trembler will throb no more.”

“ For

“For pity, my dear Valini,” said Adeline,  
“spare me so cruel a picture; do not give  
“way to unavailing sorrow; live and be  
“happy!”

“Happiness and I,” replied the Italian,  
“have long, very long been strangers; in a  
“moment of madness, my Adeline, I for-  
“feited at once, ah how shamefully for-  
“feited, my innocence, my virtue! and at  
“the instigation of infuriate love, murdered  
“my peace, and bid adieu to honour!”

“Recollect yourself, my beloved friend,”  
said Adeline, “you would not, perhaps, in  
“your more collected moments have said  
“so much. The servants,” added she,  
“shall carry our instruments to the hermi-  
“tage on the shore, with some fruit and  
“wine; and when we have finished our little  
“repast, we will perform the evening service  
“to the Virgin together; it will compose  
“you, and make me happier.”

Adeline,



Adeline, to whom Valini's increasing melancholy became every day more alarming, employed all the means in her power to divert her, wishing to restore her mind to that calm and tranquil state of resignation, which, except at intervals, it generally appeared to enjoy. The journey to England Adeline saw had much affected both her spirits and constitution. Although she was utterly ignorant of the causes in which that alteration originated, she very sincerely lamented the effect; and proposed this little concert in the hermitage, in order to tranquillize her, or if it should fail of that end, it would afford her an opportunity of relieving her oppressed mind, by imparting the cause of her sorrows, which now, for the first time in her life, she appeared desirous of doing.

The servants were dispatched before with refreshments, and the two friends slowly followed them. When they came to the hermitage

mitage Adeline dismissed her domestics, unknown to Valini, in order to give that lady an opportunity of reposing her confidence in her unheard.

Valini however appeared to be enlivened by the breeze, and conversed without emotion, seeming desirous, by a more lively conversation, to obliterate from the memory of Adeline what had just passed in the château.

Adeline saw her motive, and gave way to it; but the occasion of exerting herself to amuse Valini being at an end, she herself began to sink into pensiveness and dejection.

A long silence ensued; the eyes of both were fixed upon the waves before them, whose beautiful green colour, and gentle motion, seemed well calculated to inspire serenity.

Valini,

Valini, at length, taking up a peach, held it towards Adeline, and cried, "behold the blooming cheeks of Montalville."

Adeline faintly smiled, and sighed.

Valini, anxious that her thoughts should be entirely disengaged from reflecting upon her own inadvertent expressions in the château, uttered in a lively tone, "Come, come, if you will not eat, let me hear you sing, while I apply my lips to Julien's rosy cheeks; why that jealous frown?" cried the Italian, and cutting the peach, gave the blooming side to Adeline. "This pale half," added she, mournfully, "is more emblematical of the lifeless countenance of him whose loss I mourn."

Adeline made no reply, but perceiving the tears stealing down the lovely face of her friend, who was sinking back into a train of mournful thoughts which her own comparison

parison had suggested, began to sing a little song, which Julien's absence, and her fears for his safety, had occasioned her to compose.

## SONNET.

WHEN dark'ning shadows from the mountains fell,  
And careful shepherds fold their bleating sheep,  
When solemn sounds from yonder convent bell,  
Born by the breezes, through the meadow sweep :

Her lute attun'd to Sorrow's softest strain,  
Poor Erminguard would wander through the grove,  
Of Hubert's absence mournfully complain,  
And pray the Virgin to protect her love.

Valini, who saw through this disguise of names, faintly smiled, saying, hark ! my love, the convent bell is now tolling, the breezes are in full sweep, every thing is exactly in order ; would you wish to retire to the grove ?

The sun was now sinking behind the glowing waves. Valini's raillery had recalled



called Adeline's vivacity, and they were engaged in a lively conversation, when Valini exclaimed, O Dio ! there is a boat close in shore, and the people are about to land, what can it mean ?

Adeline was rising to make her escape ; but Valini, taking hold of her, desired her not to be alarmed, for the servants would protect them.

" Ho'y Virgin protect us !" exclaimed Adeline, I have sent them all back to the château." Valini, who had not heard the order, concluded they were in waiting above in the grove. " Let us then fly instantly !" cried she, seizing Adeline's arms, and hurrying her forward.

The persons who were landing from the boat, seeing them leave the hermitage, and guessing their intention, called out, " Madame Valini ! Lady Adeline !"

Valini,

Valini, hearing her name mentioned, concluded they were not robbers, but some neighbouring gentlemen, who had sailed along the shore for their diversion; concluding therefore that there was nothing to apprehend, she turned round and looked towards them.

The person, who had called after them, held up something, which appeared to be a packet of letters; this arrested the attention of both ladies, and they concluded it was some intelligence from England, not reflecting upon the unusual circumstance of a boat approaching the hermitage, where the landing was difficult.

The ladies, in their eagerness to hear of the Countess de Villeverde, hastened to meet the messengers, when one of them stumbled, and falling to the ground, seemed by the assistance which the rest afforded him, to be very much hurt.

Adelin

Adeline and Valini, quickening their pace, came up as they were raising the fallen person from the ground. Adeline was kindly enquiring into the consequences of the accident, when the whole party surrounded her and Valini.

They screamed aloud for assistance ; and Valini demanded, with an air of dignity, what all this meant ?

No answer was returned ; but they immediately seized Valini, and, tying a bandage across her mouth, hurried her along towards the boat, and were approaching Adeline, whose fortitude now utterly forsook her, and she fainted in their arms.

## CHAP. XIV.

"Inconstant man, that loved all he saw,  
"And lusted after all that he did love."

**T**HE Baron de Beauval had left Petersvale under pretence of making the tour of England, but in reality in order to return into Normandy to carry into effect his designs upon Adeline.

Beauval reflected that the passion Adeline entertained for Julien would throw numberless difficulties in his way, not that he entertained any doubts of finally succeeding with any woman whom he thought worth the trouble of pursuing. The dignity of Adeline's manners he mistook for a fondness for



for state, and for female vanity, which he imagined his great wealth, and the title of Baroness de Beauval, would put it so much in her power to gratify, that they would therefore be irresistible temptations; and his person, the assurances which his mirror and his valet daily gave him, confirmed him in believing to be unexceptionable.

He knew Adeline was still ignorant of the discoveries which had been made respecting Julien, and he dared not disclose them to her, lest Madame de Villeverde should, in return, inform her daughter that he had been the murderer of his last wife, and this, in spite of all his personal vanity, he knew would be an insuperable obstacle, not only with Adeline, but to any other woman's acceptance of him.

Poor Adeline had, while she continued at Petersvale, allowed him liberties, to which the Baron artfully gave the air of playful  
VOL. II. D familiarities,

familiarities, and which she considered as of no importance between two persons of such different ages, and who were shortly to be so nearly connected.

This had lighted up a flame in the heart of the Baron, which he was at no pains to extinguish. Her touch thrilled through every nerve; her voice when she sang vibrated to his heart; every graceful motion of her elegant figure filled him with an ecstasy, which he found very difficult to conceal.

Burning with desire, he returned secretly to his château, and concerted with the villainous Jew, who was still in his pay, a scheme to get her into his power, of which the accident of her being in the hermitage had very much facilitated the success. He resolved to possess her person, after which, he concluded, her affection would follow of course, or might be gained at leisure;

leisure ; but as a previous step to this, both to save himself from part of the reproach which would necessarily fall upon him, and to secure her estate, he determined to compel an old priest, who lived in his château, to pronounce the nuptial benediction over them in his own chapel ; with the consent of Adeline, if that could be obtained ; but to pronounce it at any rate. For though this would not make her legally his wife, it would be a great step towards inducing her afterwards to become so, and would carry an air of regard to the quality of her family, in the eagerness and danger by which he had sought their alliance. For something like fear would occasionally whisper that the young Earl of Petersvale was not of a character to be insulted with impunity.

Julien, whom he formerly had loved with great affection, he now scarcely remembered, or thought of him only as the bastard of Reginald ; he rejoiced that the youth

was no longer an obstacle, and he cursed him in his heart for ever having been beloved by Adeline; but he comforted himself in the reflection, that Lady Adeline would instantly condemn him, as soon as his birth came to be known; and that her brother would cease to think of him for Adeline, when he found he could not succeed to the title and estate of Beauval, but would prefer the father, possessed of these advantages, to a young man, whose highest claim was that of being his illegitimate nephew, after having so long passed for his son.

Adeline, recovering from her fainting fit, beheld Valini hanging over her in tears.

“Alas! my dear friend,” said she, “what has happened to us?” but when she raised her head, and saw the water through the window of the cabin, “My God!” exclaimed Adeline, “it is all too true, we are at sea, and the vessel is under sail.”

Valini



Valini besought her to compose herself, and rely upon her protection; and while she was endeavouring to restore her spirits, a man entered the cabin with wine and refreshments, and placing them upon the table, retired without speaking. Valini examined the man narrowly, but could not see his face, as he had a furred cap drawn low upon his forehead, and a cloth covered the lower part of his countenance.

Valini, who had gone through many situations unpleasant and alarming to a woman of rank and delicacy, after the first shock of this alarm, recovered her presence of mind. She even rejoiced that the ravishers had taken her with the dear daughter of her heart, as she fondly called Adeline; her presence she hoped would protect Adeline from any further insult. The Italian, who had a great deal of natural courage, determined even to die in her defence; and bitterly lamented her imprudence in leav-

ing England before Madame de Villeverde; she hoped, however, to find means of informing Lord Petersvale of their situation, from whatever place they might be carried to; she recollected, and informed Adeline, that she had, in her pocket, a hundred louis d'ors, which were to have been paid that evening as the portion of two girls, belonging to her establishment at Villeverde, whom she had appointed to come and receive them of her at the château. when she came out of her oratory, in order to retire to her chamber. "This sum is chiefly in bills upon Paris," added she, "but I have twenty louis d'ors in money, which will be sufficient to bribe some of our attendants to inform the Earl of our situation."

While the two ladies were projecting plans for their escape by means of this money, the little vessel proceeded to coast along shore; and the night came on extremely

tremely dark. The same man entered again, and put down lights upon the table.

Valini demanded, to what place was their vessel bound? The fellow placed his finger to his mouth, to indicate that he should answer no questions; but perceiving that every thing remained upon the table as he had left it, he poured out some wine, and offered to Adeline, and afterwards to Valini; both refused it, and the man immediately retired, making a low bow, as a kind of assurance that they would be treated with respect.

Soon afterwards the vessel cast anchor, and several persons came into the cabin, to put the ladies into the boat, and take them a shore. They remonstrated, threatened, and entreated, but to no purpose, for their conductors preserved an obstinate silence, in the midst of the most respectful behaviour, and with great ceremony lowered

D 4

them

them into the boat with a chair, and rowed off with them.

The Baron de Beauval, who had conducted this whole enterprise in person, caused them to be led through a little postern up a private stair case, into an apartment in the round tower, where every thing was prepared for their reception.

The ladies, who had been a moment before in total darkness, were struck with the profuse illumination and splendour of the apartment, which, being fitted up in the last age, had an air of grandeur and magnificence which the frippery of modern decorations never bestows.

A tall man, masked, entered the room, and placed couches for them on each side the table, on which a supper was disposed with an elegance suitable to the appearance of the rest.

Valini,



Valini, observing Adeline turn pale, and fearing she would faint, endeavoured, by assuming a vivacity which she was far from feeling, to cheer her.

“I hope,” said she, turning to the attendant, “that your lord will favour us with his company, after bringing us to his château with so much expedition!” The fellow, supposing her to be an old woman, paid all his attention to Adeline, and, without noticing her, went to stand behind that lady’s seat.

The Italian, not all discouraged by this insolence, and perhaps guessing the cause of it, threw up her veil, and discovered to him a lovely and majestic countenance, which had every charm but that of youth.

“Come, come,” cried Valini, “let us sit down to supper; his Lordship will doubtless soon pay us a visit.”

Adeline, in obedience to Valini, placed herself at table, but immediately burst into tears.

Valini strove to comfort, and prevail upon her to eat, and even herself set the example, when raising her eyes towards the man in a masque, who stood behind Adeline's chair, she saw, in a distant part of the chamber, a picture which appeared to be in motion; she observed it attentively without appearing to do so; it slowly slid on one side, and a figure appeared behind, at the sight of which, Valini, striking her forehead with great agitation, sprang from the table, shrieking and throwing herself into the arms of the man who was serving Adeline; and having pronounced, in a tone of agony, the name of Reginald, immediately fell into a fit.

Adeline herself was nearly in the same situation, when a woman came into the apartment, and having sprinkled some water  
in

in the face of Valini, she began to recover ; as soon as she became sensible, Adeline eagerly enquired into the occasion of her alarm, but Valini's eyes were bent upon vacancy, and she continued for some time in deep meditation, when suddenly falling at the feet of the man who supported her, she conjured him, in the most pathetic manner, to speak to her. " O tell me ! tell me ! " cried she, " and may all the saints and angels " bless thee as thou speakest truly, was it " the Chevalier I saw ? "

The man began to tremble ; Valini, who was embracing his knees, felt it, and her own fears redoubled, but she still entreated him, with increasing earnestness, to reply to her. " Ah, it was the Chevalier, then, come " to call us hence ; alas ! you saw him, and " the pale gleam that wandered round his " figure. "

Adeline, though surprised, was less  
D 6 alarmed

alarmed at this, than the two attendants; for though more violent, it very much resembled Valini's occasional derangements; she therefore went to her, and placing her in a chair, besought her to recollect herself.

“Oh! that picture, that picture!” replied the Italian; their masked attendant, who now thoroughly comprehended the cause of her fright, winked upon Gertrude the female, who had been sent to recover Valini, and left the room.

Gertrude proposed that the lady should go to bed. Adeline, who thought herself equally unsafe every way, yet dreaded to leave their present apartment, tho' she knew not why, and hesitated without reply; but Valini rising from the couch on which she was sitting, led the way herself to a door, at the extremity of the saloon, which she seemed to be perfectly acquainted with, and opening



ing it, entered upon a long and dark passage.

Adeline seized her arm, exclaiming, "my dear Valini, where are you going?"

"Follow me," replied the Italian.

Adeline obeyed, trembling, and Gertrude having snatched up a branch of lights, which stood upon the supper table, ran after, in order to conduct them; Valini, however, herself opening a door upon the right hand, entered a small apartment, neatly but plainly furnished, beyond which there was a large chamber, fitted up with a magnificence answering to that of the saloon; Gertrude led the way thither, but Valini, throwing herself into a chair in the first room, sighed as if her heart was breaking, and after a moment of silence, burst into tears. Adeline was pleased to see her tears, and let them flow without interruption; and  
when

when she saw her a little composed, tenderly enquired, what had occasioned her alarm ?

“ Oh !” said Valini, “ speak not of it !”  
“ it is gone, and I hope will visit me no more ; alas !” said she, looking round her, “ it was here.”

“ What means my friend ?” demanded Adeline.

“ Alas !” added Valini, “ I too well remember this fatal chamber.”

“ Do you then know where we are ?” asked Adeline, amazed.

“ Without doubt,” replied the Italian ;  
“ It is the place at the sight of which my remembrance sickens. This dreaded spot recalls to my mind a train of dreadful ideas.”

"ideas that a long course of repentance has  
"not been able to obliterate."

"Unfortunate Valini," said Adeline, who  
concluded that her mind was again deranged  
by the violence that had been offered them  
both.

"Unfortunate indeed!" repeated Valini,  
"and criminal indeed! unfortunate ever to  
"have entered the château de Beauval; and  
"criminal, most criminal"—

Gertrude started; and Adeline exclaimed,  
"De Beauval! are we in that château?"

"Dear Adeline, child of my heart," re-  
plied the Italian; "Heaven, I hope, will  
"save thy innocence, but justice now pur-  
"sues my crimes, and this, the scene of my  
"guilt, is chosen for that of my punish-  
"ment."

"Hush, hush, my dear Valini;" said  
Adeline,

Adeline, placing her hand before her mouth, and turning to Gertrude, commanded her to leave them to themselves."

"No, no, cried Valini," disengaging herself, "let the woman stay; is old Cicely still living?" demanded the Italian.

Gertrude replied in the affirmative, adding, "but she is now very old, and become very infirm."

"Can I see her?" demanded Valini. "No, Madam," replied the other, "no female will be admitted to your presence but myself."

"Does any one overhear us?" demanded the Italian, in a low voice; "I would speak to you unheard."

Gertrude went to examine the outward room, and assuring her there was no one near,



near, Valini desired her to fasten the door of the little chamber, and attend her in the inner one. As soon as they had entered, Valini secured that door also; the woman began to be alarmed, as she took Valini for a lunatic, which opinion was soon after considerably confirmed, when the Italian, feeling beneath her robe, drew out of her girdle a small poniard, which had been given her by her mother, and which she constantly wore, and seizing Gertrude's hair strongly with one hand, she held the dagger to her throat with the other.

“Silence !” said Valini, “if you attempt to call out, you die.”

Adeline now verily thought her friend was mad in reality, and strove to disengage the woman from her grasp, promising she should do as she desired.

“Yes, indeed I will, Mademoiselle,” said the

the affrighted female.

Valini let go her hair, and Gertrude fell on her knees before the resolute Italian.

“Tell me,” demanded Valini, “what is the Baron’s intention in bringing us here? he can have no design upon this young lady, who is soon to marry his son; and as to me, he scarcely ever saw me in my present character; explain this enigma.”

Gertrude protested she knew nothing of the Baron’s intentions, and had only been told in general, that she was to attend upon two ladies, who were expected to arrive that evening.

“I am glad,” said Valini, “that you are not his confidant, since you will betray no trust by entering into my service, which is,” added she, pointing to Adeline, “the service of virtue: Oh, woman,” continued

tinued she, "forbear to aid the purposes of  
"accursed guilt, 'twill blacken all your  
"thoughts, and destroy your soul; 'twill  
"sink you beneath the reach of mercy—  
"The fangs of fiends will grasp your heart,  
"and plunge you quick into perdition."

The female shuddered, and Adeline also trembled for the consequences that might be apprehended from Valini's rage.

"But follow virtue, and befriend the virtuous," added Valini, in a softened tone, "and all your thoughts will bring you peace. Heaven will smile upon you; and in every opening prospect through your life, pleasure and joy will dance before you."

The woman, who had long renounced the service of virtue, paid little attention to what Valini was saying; and her eyes wandered alternately from the dagger to those of  
of

of Valini, where she thought she still discerned the wildness of madness; and longed for nothing more earnestly, than to escape out of the apartment.

“Here,” said Valini, presenting a handful of louis d’ors, which instantly rivetted her attention, “you must assist us to escape; you shall go with us, and I will take care of your fortune.”

The woman readily promised any thing to get away; but represented to her, that if they left the château, which was hardly possible, they could go no where, without a carriage and guides, in so dark a night, and these she faithfully promised should be in readiness on the following evening. Valini poured the money into her hand; and Gertrude repeated her promises, accompanied with a thousand benedictions to the generous lady.

“Nay,”



"Nay," said Valini, "I have no fears for myself, and Adeline is of a family, whose motto is rather to die than be dishonoured; but if you betray us, eternal curses will await you."

The woman again repeated her assurances.

"Swear," cried the Italian, drawing a crucifix from her bosom, "swear upon this blessed image, that you will not reveal this conversation to the Baron."

The woman, who looked upon an oath when extorted by the fear of death as not very binding, readily did as she was commanded; and Valini, driving her out of the chamber, returned to Adeline, who, finding all her endeavours at moderating the violence of Valini to be in vain, had set a silent spectator of this scene.

Valini,

Valini, throwing herself into a chair, fixed her eyes upon the ground without uttering a word. Adeline also remained silent, absorbed in reflection upon her present situation; Valini's declaration that they were in the château de Beauval, had opened her eyes to behold the Baron's extraordinary tenderness to her, at Petersvale, in its true light; she saw all her danger, and shuddered at it; no longer wondering at the Baron's cold letter to Julien, which she now attributed to his jealousy, and to no other cause; she resolved to die, rather than be false to Julien; but when she saw how little chance she had of escaping the Baron's brutal violence, by any other means than death, now she was so completely in his power, she bitterly lamented her imprudence and folly in having left England without her brother, or at least her mother's protection. "Julien too is absent!" exclaimed she, "despair is before me, and I have no one to protect me."

Valini

Valini was roused from her reverie by this exclamation, and replied, in a tone of most impressive firmness, "Fear nothing, my child, that moment in which Beauval fails in the respect he owes you, shall be his last."

"Alas!" replied Adeline, "my ruin is inevitable; we cannot withstand his power."

"But we can die!" said Valini.

Adeline made no reply; she had not the Roman fortitude of Valini, to whom, besides her natural courage, life had long been a burthen. Adeline was young, and full of hope; and Julien was an object that rendered life doubly dear to her. She endeavoured to persuade herself, although she fancied she had discovered something in Gertrude that did not altogether justify that persuasion; yet she still hoped, that the woman

woman might be induced by Valini's bribe, and the hope of future fortune, to effect their escape. If that should not succeed, she looked forward to the necessity of becoming, instead of her dear Julien's wife, his mother-in law ; starting up at an idea so hateful and detestable, she eagerly examined every outlet of the chamber, and flew to the window, in order to make her escape, at the hazard even of her life ; but she found them crossed and re-crossed with bars of iron firmly secured in the stone work.

Valini, who had followed her with her eyes, said, " No, my Adeline, we cannot  
" escape without the assistance of the wo-  
" man ; but, I believe, we shall be safe for  
" this night, and to-morrow we shall have  
" time for deliberation. In the mean while,  
" my love, I entreat that you will go to bed ;  
" we must not exhaust ourselves, we shall  
" have need of all our strength. The door,  
" which leads from this room to the saloon,  
" is



"is well secured, and I myself will sleep in  
"the outer chamber, so that no one can ap-  
"proach you."

Adeline, hearing her speak in so deter-  
mined a manner, and seeing still the remains  
of frenzy in her countenance, durst not op-  
pose her. Valini taking one of the candles  
out of the branch, placed it in the chande-  
lier of a girandole in Adeline's chamber, and  
left her to her repose.

The unfortunate Italian, who had had a  
glimpse of the Baron behind the sliding pic-  
ture, the outline of whose figure had some  
resemblance to that of Reginald, now enter-  
tained the melancholy hope, that the dead  
Chevalier would again appear to her when  
she was alone in the little chamber. There  
was in that apartment a small cabinet, to  
which Reginald, and Valini under the cha-  
racter of his page, had contrived a false  
VOL. II. E back,

back, for the pretended purpose of the Baroness's passing from her dressing room, which was on the other side, to her assignations with Reginald; by means of which, Valini had so successfully carried on her imposture, by dressing herself in a night robe of Rohesia's, and passing through the cabinet. This piece of furniture, which was a cabinet on each side of the partition that separated the two chambers, was furnished on both sides with a set of drawers fixed in a frame, that fastened with a spring to the back, and the whole so dextrously contrived, that the most minute observer would not have suspected this furniture to be intended for any other than its ostensible purpose, that of containing natural curiosities, petrifications, &c. with which it was filled; no person was acquainted with its real use, but Reginald and Marco, and nothing but taking it down entirely could have led to a discovery.

Valini

Valini kept her eyes fixed upon the cabinet for hours, in expectation of seeing Reginald. The least noise occasioned by the wind, or any other cause, Valini shuddered at, as the prelude to the approach of Reginald. At length day appeared, and Valini began to abandon her hopes ; and overcome by fatigue, vexation, and horror, sunk down upon her bed in an unquiet slumber.

## CHAP. XV.

“ Within yon dark embattled Tower.

ADELINE rose with the sun, and stealing softly into Valini's chamber, seated herself by her, to watch till she should awake. The Italian talked and mourned in her sleep; and Adeline could frequently distinguish the names of Reginald and Rohesia. Valini appeared much agitated, the tears forced their way between her eye-lids, she struggled, and seemed convulsed, uttering sighs which pierced the heart of her young pupil. At length, she became suddenly quite calm; and Adeline ran to set open the casements, in order to give her air, fearing she was dying, as she could not perceive her  
to



to breathe. Having raised her up, and sprinkled some water upon her face and bosom, Valini opened her eyes, saying, in a feeble voice, "I thought he had killed me." Seeing Adeline, and recollecting herself, she cast her arms round her neck, calling her her dear child, and telling her, she had been hurried by an alarming dream, besought her to excuse the apparent wildness of her manners; adding, that she would endeavour to repress her feelings, and become more composed. She then began talking of their situation; and these two amiable women endeavoured to afford mutual consolation to each other.

Gertrude, the moment she had escaped from the mad woman, as she called Valini, flew to inform the Jew, her husband, of all that had passed in the apartments of the round tower. The Jew found himself agreeably refreshed after the fatigue of his wife's prolixity, upon her producing ten louis

d'ors, which Valini had given her ; she very prudently suppressed the remainder in her relation, in order to afford herself an opportunity of converting them to her own use.

The Jew continued for some moments, rubbing his forehead in deep thought ; while his virtuous help mate began to be somewhat impatient for her instructions.

"Do you think they have any more money," demanded the Jew.

Gertrude thought not, as ten louis were, in her opinion, a considerable sum for a Lady to have in her pocket, who did not think of leaving home.

"Pshaw," replied the Jew, "what are ten louis between the two?"

"St. Ursula !" exclaimed Gertrude, "I forgot

"forgot Mademoiselle, she did not give me  
"any thing."

"Be sure you keep out of sight," commanded the Jew, "and leave them to me.  
"I will drain them, upon some pretence or  
"other, of what cash they have, before I  
"give them up to the Baron; he dares not  
"but wait my time."

"Very well," replied the wife, surlily;  
"you always know best."

"To be sure I do," retorted the Jew;  
and ordered her to get about her business.

When the ladies left the chamber, and entered the saloon, they saw the same man, in a mask, standing behind a settee, ready to attend upon them at breakfast.

Adeline demanded, why Gertrude did not attend them?

The Jew, who now found his interest concerned in breaking the Baron's command of silence, replied, "My wife, Madam, left the château early this morning, in order to complete some business for my Lord, at a town in the neighbourhood."

The Ladies, who hoped Gertrude was gone to serve them, exchanged a smile of congratulation.

The Jew, observing this, drew nearer, and bowing to Adeline, hoped Mademoiselle had not employed his wife in any way which might draw upon them the displeasure of their Lord, on whom was their sole dependence.

Valini, who concluded there could be no difference of interest between a man and his wife, asked, "whether he found the Baron a generous master?"

The



The Jew put on an air of surprise at the question ; and replied, " No, Madam, it " is very well known that the Baron is a " mere miser : witness his stealing Made- " moiselle de Villeverde in order to get her " estate."

Adeline smiled at this observation, saying, " what then, young man, you imagine " that was his only reason for carrying me " off."

" Pardon me, Mademoiselle," said the Jew, making one of his best bows ; " the " Baron had doubtless other"—

" Nonsense," cried Valini ; " the Baron " is as weak as he is unprincipled ; and " since he is also so very mean as to neglect " rewarding his dependants, persons who " risk so much in his service, perhaps you " would not hesitate to attach yourself to " others who are more generous."

The Jew made a profound bow."

"In one word," cried Valini, "will you  
"open to us the doors of our prison?"  
"every moment of our stay here is more  
"and more prejudicial to my Adeline's re-  
"putation; we have passed one night here,  
"but, at any rate, must leave the château  
"before another."

The Jew insinuated, they were such ge-  
nerous Ladies, that he would lay down his  
life to serve them.

"I understand you," said Adeline, with  
whom Valini had divided her purse; "you  
"shall not find us wanting in that particu-  
"lar; here, take this order, and I promise  
"you, upon my honour, if you deliver me  
"from Beauval, I will certainly take care  
"of your fortune."

The

The Jew, reading the bill, which was a draught for twenty pistoles upon St. James, a banker at Paris, was surprised at her liberality, and began to waver in his fidelity to the Baron; but the reflection that the power he had over Beauval, on account of having been his agent in procuring the death of Rohesia, made him, in effect, almost master of his whole fortune, he did not think it prudent to give up a certainty, in order to trust to promises which might be converted into punishments,

He replied, however, that he considered himself as no longer belonging to the Baron, but attached himself for life to the service of Lady Adeline, whose deliverance he would labour to effect upon the first possible opportunity.

"Two gentlemen," continued the Jew, "arrived at the château last night, which is the reason you have not seen the Ba-

“ron ; they depart early to-morrow morning ; Mounsieur is to conduct them on their way to Rouen ; while he is absent, Mademoiselle, I will bring a carriage into the grove behind the château, with which I will have the honour to conduct you where you shall please to direct.”

The ladies both loaded him with thanks and promises ; and Valini observed, that it would be highly desirable to have it in their power to assure Julien and Lord Petersvale, that they had escaped from Beauval without having seen the Baron.

“ You need be under no apprehensions, Madam,” replied the Jew ; “ he will not leave the Chevaliers an instant, least they should wander to this side of the château, and see or hear any thing of you. Here are books and papers,” said the Jew, opening a little cabinet ; “ be pleased to amuse yourselves for this day, Ladies ; and  
“ I



"I engage to set you at liberty soon after  
"day appears to-morrow."

Valini, having now discharged her duty to Adeline, besought her to allow her to withdraw into the little chamber. Adeline, who imagined it was to perform her devotions, readily assented.

Valini, after securing the entrance, opened the cabinet, by means of the spring which she was acquainted with, and passed into the Baroness's dressing room, on the other side. It was evidently in the same state in which it had been during that Lady's life. A green awning was fixed on the outside over the windows, which being, like all the rest in the château, filled with painted glass, cast a solemn gloom upon every object round her.

Some flower pots, which stood in the windows, contained nothing now but hard  
and

and dry earth, in the midst of which, the dead and arid stalks of the flowers remained. Alas ! thought the Italian, such now is the late blooming and beautiful Rohesia ! Some of her robes hung in a press in a corner of the chamber, which forced upon the mind of Valini the infamous purposes to which she herself had formerly prostituted them, when she entered through the cabinet to Reginald. The remembrance of those scenes now brought with them nothing of their former guilty transports ; but filled the soul of Valini with grief, shame, and contrition. Her heart swelled, and she could hardly breathe ; the chamber, which had been long unopened, wanted air ; Valini durst not open the windows for fear of being discovered by some one below ; but hurried into the larger apartment, which had been Rohesia's bed chamber, and ran towards the wide and lofty chimney, in order to breathe, and preserve herself from fainting.

Above

Above the chimney was a full length picture of Reginald, drawn in the same habit in which she had first seen him at Venice ; Valini started at the sight of this picture, gazing upon it with emotions of grief, pleasure, and surprise. The unexpected appearance of Reginald, though only upon canvass, affected her to the heart ; a thousand ideas, connected with her former passion for the lovely Frenchman, rushed tumultuously upon her mind ; her bosom heaved, and an emotion of long repressed desire sparkled in her eyes, as they wandered over the features and figure of the picture. Some birds fluttering in the chimney recalled her to a recollection of her situation ; her reason and her devotion came to her aid. Forbearing to look any longer upon the picture, she fell upon her knees before a crucifix which stood in a little nich near the bed, and performed her morning service to the Virgin. Rising from her devotions, Valini approached the great door of  
the

the chamber, which was fastened with a spring lock, and opened upon the north gallery of the château ; she listened if there was any one near, and believing herself secure, she opened the door, and looked along the gloomy and extensive gallery ; the chill air of this vast apartment, the long range of figures upon the walls, the antiquated representations of the silent and long departed Lords and Ladies of the château, together with the mournful sounds which came from the melancholy cypress trees waving before the windows, depressed her spirits, and made her hasten back through the cabinet, to have the comfort of Adeline's society.

The Baron, heartily cursing his two friends for their impertinent visit, resolved to get rid of them by some means or other that night ; in the mean time, he contrived to slip from them for a few minutes, in order to place himself behind the sliding picture, and



and regalé his ears with the dulcet voice of his lovely Adeline.

Mademoiselle de Villeverde, whose thoughts were entirely taken up with regret at Julien's long and strange absence, had placed herself in a window, and was mournfully contemplating the rich and fertile plains of Normandy, which were stretched out in long prospective before the windows of the château; beneath her was an extensive lawn, bordered with shrubberies, and decorated with tufts of flowers: Adeline had been drawing a miniature of Julien from recollection, and had written under it the following lines, which she was repeating in a mournful voice when the Baron first placed himself behind the picture.

#### THE SUN-FLOWER.

WHEN erst the V'ilet of the dell  
Became enamour'd of the Rose,  
The Zephyrs would her passion tell,  
Her own blue eyes her love disclose.

The

The Sun-flower, stung with envious pride,

Thrust forth a rough and clumsy leaf,

Rejoic'd the lovers to divide,

And heedless of the maiden's grief.

Thus Envy secretly repines,

And strives to mar another's joy,

And Lust with Tyranny combines,

A tender union to destroy.

The Jew, who had been hunting all over the castle, came at last into the little star chamber where Beauval was standing, and informed him that the two Chevaliers were that moment gone through the cloisters into the shrubbery on that side of the château. The Baron, whom Adeline's lines had by no means put in the best humour, hastened after his visitors, to lead them another way, charging the Jew to pay every attention to the ladies, firmly resolving to make Adeline his own that very night, and not even to apprise her of his intention, until the instant on which it was to be put into execution. He saw it was in vain to attempt gaining her consent,

consent, and knew though it was not in his power to make her legally his wife, without having all the ceremonies of the church performed; yet it was fully in his power to make her so effectually; and he did not foresee any thing which could possibly prevent it. He therefore signified his intentions to the Jew, and commanded him to have every thing ready for that purpose at midnight.

The Israelite did not altogether approve of this precipitation, hoping to make something more of the Ladies beforehand; but at length, after a long debate with himself, whether he should or should not permit his Lord to do as he pleased, he determined upon making no opposition; contenting himself with the sum which he was to finger from the Baron immediately after that event, with which he designed instantly to decamp from Beauval, where he had more  
reasons

reasons than one for thinking his situation was becoming dangerous.

The Ladies passed a tedious day. Valini, sometimes talking incoherently, and at others sinking into silence and melancholy, engrossed the whole attention of Adeline, who employed herself in vain endeavours to cheer and comfort her; and the Jew having thoroughly tutored Gertrude, allowed her to attend them again in the evening.



## CHAP. XVI.

"Lo, here she comes, this is her very guise."

THE Baron had found means to dismiss his visitors, and remained in his chamber till after all the domestics of the château who were not acquainted with his plan had retired to bed; and he was meditating upon future scenes of grandeur and pleasure, which he promised himself in introducing Adeline, as Baroness de Beauval, among his friends; and the éclat which this young beauty would procure him at Paris; when Gertrude rushed suddenly into the chamber.

Amazement and terror were strongly  
marked

marked in her countenance; breathless and trembling she sunk into a chair near the Baron.

Beauval demanded, what had so alarmed her?"

"Oh, my Lord! my Lord!" feebly uttered Gertrude, "The Baroness!"

Beauval felt himself moved, and again entreated her to say what she had seen.

Gertrude, looking fearfully towards the entrance of the chamber, clasped the Baron's arm for protection, still repeating the same words.

The Baron, appalled by the real terror of his domestic, look anxiously towards the door, still desiring Gertrude would describe what she had seen.

The

The woman was a long time incapable of speaking; the door stood open; and Beauval, looking earnestly, endeavoured to discover from whence these apprehensions proceeded. A gale of wind, sighing among the cypress trees in the court, filled the gallery with dismal sounds; and a door closed at some distance. Beauval, finding this suspense insupportable, endeavoured to shake off Gertrude, and was going to examine the passage; the woman however held him fast; assuring him he would meet the Baroness.

“Impossible!” cried Beauval, “you know my wife has long been dead; did you see her face?”

“No, my Lord; your Lordship will not allow us to appear with lights in the north gallery; but when she glided by me, I saw her white robe, the same my Lady used to wear when she was alive.”

“There

"There is a moon," said Beauval, "which must be now rising; are you sure it was not some shadow from the stained glass in the windows?"

"Oh, yes, my Lord," replied the woman; "I am sure it was my Lady, and nothing else. I saw her coming, and crept behind one of the high old chairs; she passed close by me, and went slowly on to the end of the gallery."

Beauval shuddered.

"I watched her, my Lord, to the end of the gallery, where she pushed open a door, and went into the chamber in which she died."

While Gertrude was yet speaking, a sudden gust of wind which blew up the great stair case, opened the door of the chamber wider, and made it creak upon its hinges; both



both fixed their eyes upon it. In a moment the figure of a woman entered, and appeared before them. Gertrude, exceedingly terrified, ran for protection to the Baron. Beauval himself, overcome with terror, fell upon his knees, expecting some horrible catastrophe.

The figure, clothed in a loose robe and covered with a veil, could not be distinguished; but uttering a heavy sigh, it slowly lifted up its head and hands to heaven, and glided away.

The Baron endeavoured to pray, but the horror of having seen his murdered wife overcame him, and he sunk down almost insensible upon the floor.

The Jew had placed lights in the chapel, had awakened Augustin, and ordered him to attend the Baron there instantly; he had also stationed the rest of the Baron's agents in this business as he had been ordered; and

was coming to inform his employer that every thing was ready ; when, as he was passing through the gallery, something brilliant upon the floor attracted his attention. Stooping to examine what it was, he took up a dagger, richly ornamented with jewels. The Jew's heart leaped at this prize, which he hastily secured in his vest, and proceeded to the Baron's chamber.

The noise of his entrance roused Beauval ; but the moment he cast his eyes upon the Jew, a convulsive shivering shook his whole frame, and he motioned his diabolical agent to withdraw.

The Jew retreated a few paces, but seeing Gertrude upon the floor, came forward again in order to raise her. Gertrude had fainted, and the Jew exclaimed that she was dead.

“ Ah ! she is dead ! ” repeated the Baron, in a hollow tone ; but recollecting that he  
was

was speaking of Gertrude, he added, "No, no, she is reviving."

"Is she gone?" said Gertrude, recovering from her alarm; "is she gone, my Lord?"

The Jew, who was ignorant of the circumstance which had just passed, informed Beauval, that every thing was now ready in the chapel.

"I am unwell to-night," replied the Baron; "to-morrow perhaps"—

"Oh, the Baroness!" groaned out Gertrude.

Beauval looked towards the door, adding, "Keep this woman from the other servants; to-morrow perhaps I may be"—

"Oh, my Lord!" exclaimed Gertrude, "to-morrow we shall never see; the château

"will certainly be swallowed up; we shall never out-live this night."

"Peace!" cried the Baron, "and go to your chamber."

"Murder will out," cried Gertrude; "every body said the Baroness did not come fairly by her death; and this lovely young Lady, sure, my Lord, you will not kill her too?"

The Baron cast a stern look on Gertrude, and retreated into his bed-chamber.

The Jew, who was excessively vexed at his wife's ill-timed loquacity, endeavoured in vain to silence her, and at last took her up and carried her to their own room, where he soon found means to pacify her, and remove the cause of her alarm, by convincing her that she could not possibly have seen the Baroness.

He



He asked if she was certain that the Ladies were in their chambers ?

“ Yes, to be sure,” replied Gertrude ;  
“ the doors are always locked, and here are  
“ both the keys.”

“ But are there no other doors to these  
“ chambers, no concealed entrances ? You  
“ know there are many such about the  
“ castle.”

“ No, I did not know it,” said the wife,  
surprised ; “ but I am sure there are none  
“ in those chambers, for I have dusted be  
“ hind the hangings a thousand times.”

“ However,” said the Jew, “ this dagger,  
“ which I have just found in the gallery,  
“ must belong to somebody.”

Gertrude eyed it eagerly, on account of  
F 3 the

the rich jewels which glittered about the hilt, and was about to speak.

But the Jew sternly commanded her to hold her tongue, and hear him. "We must hurry up this match," said he, "immediately; I am hourly in danger of being taken up for a robbery. The Baron has now about him a purse containing the pistoles which I am to receive the moment after Augustin has pronounced the nuptial benediction. With these we must leave the castle before or as soon as day appears. Say not a word about the dagger, which you see is very valuable, lest we stumble upon the owner; but go to the Baron." The Jew however doubting whether it would be prudent to send his wife to the Baron, said, "No I will go to him myself; and do you go and awake Lady Adeline, and decoy her to the chapel, while I will prepare the Baron."

The

The Jew was much at a loss to guess who it could have been that the Baron and Gertrude had seen. He suspected some foul play; but determined that the dagger which he had found should serve to defend him from any aggressions of the living, for as to fears of the dead, he held them to be childish and contemptible, well knowing that he should long ago have attracted their notice and their vengeance, if they had been capable of inflicting any. He heartily despised the Baron for being so weak as to entertain them. In the mean while he held the dagger in his hand under his vest, and was puzzling himself in conjecturing who could have been its possessor.

The confessor Augustin had long carried himself with a mysterious air, which greatly piqued the curiosity of the Jew. He had met him frequently in the north gallery after dark, and had as often watched him in order to discover what occasioned his being so much

there alone. What greatly surprised him was, that the Father usually disappeared in a chamber which was at the end of the gallery, opposite to that where his own apartment was situated ; and which had no communication, that he could discover, with any part of the inhabited side of the château. He had often overheard this priest lamenting the sudden death of the Baroness, and the long and strange absence of his pupil Julien. It came into his head that Augustin must have some design upon the Baron, and that it was this Priest, in a long robe de chambre, which he usually wore in the house, that had been seen by Gertrude, and finally that the dagger must have belonged to Augustin.

The Jew had further reasons for hating and fearing Augustin. It was not long ago that he had received a severe wound in committing a robbery, in company with some other villains, near the château. For the  
Jew



Jew was one of those who had been concerned in the murder of Reginald and his servant. Finding himself, as he thought, near his end, the Jew had sent for a Priest; for though he professed a religion so different from that of a Catholic, yet compunction for his misdeeds had operated so much on his conscience, that he could not die without disclosing the numerous villanies he had committed. To this Priest, among his other offences, he confessed the murder of Reginald and his servant. These reasons made him anxiously wish to remove Augustin from the castle, as that Priest was in an intimacy with the one that possessed his secret. The Jew concluded that this secret was not altogether unknown to Augustin himself, from the severe and menacing aspect with which that Father always regarded him. The other Priest was gone into the province of Languedoc and settled there; and if he could by any means, good or bad, get rid of Augustin, he thought he might

look upon himself as established at Beauval for life, and raise his own fortune upon the fears of the Baron, which he knew would compel him to grant every thing which he should think proper to demand. He had repeatedly tried at the removal of this Confessor, but had hitherto been baffled in every attempt ; and while his fears and impatience daily encreased, Fortune, by throwing the dagger in his way, seemed to have pointed out the means at once.

As soon as the Jew had gained admittance to the Baron's chamber, he affected to laugh heartily, telling him that the whole alarm had been occasioned by Agatha, one of the servant maids, who was accustomed to walk in her sleep. He supported this assertion by so many circumstances, that the fears of the Baron began to leave him, and his desires to take their place.

The Jew now found no difficulty in persuading

suading him to complete what he had began; and telling him that Gertrude was gone to awake Lady Adeline, Beauval hurried to the chapel to be in readiness to receive her.

Valini and Adeline had long separated for the night; but the latter, finding in herself no disposition to sleep, continued reading in her chamber; when Gertrude gently tapped at the door, and entreated Adeline to admit her.

"I am come, Mademoiselle, to release you;  
" day will soon appear; the carriage is  
" waiting in the grove, and Madame Valini  
" stays for you in the little cloisters. Come,  
" come, Mademoiselle," continued the woman, hastening her; "the Baron is suspicious itself, and we have not one moment to lose."

Adeline, seeing the woman equipped

with a travelling hood, had no suspicions ; but threw down her book, and hastened after Gertrude, who would not give her time for reflection, lest she should examine whether Valini was really gone.

Gertrude conducted her by several circuitous passages down the bell turret, by a stair case which led into the chapel ; where the Baron, taking her hand, led or rather dragged her towards the altar.

Adeline was greatly terrified, and incapable of speaking. She looked round in vain for the encouraging presence of Valini.

Beauval felt that she was agitated, and besought her tenderly not to be alarmed ; and turning to Gertrude, ordered her in a whisper to return, and if it was necessary, force Valini to join them ; for he wished by all means to have her a witness of the marriage.

Adeline



Adeline and Augustin regarded each other with equal amazement.

“What means this, my Lord?” enquired the Priest.

“Silence, old man,” replied the Baron, haughtily; “you will be informed in good time.”

Adeline cast her eyes fearfully around her, and saw in the distant gloom several men posted in different places along the aisle, with drawn swords in their hands. The Baron still held her wrist, pretending to plead the violence of his passion, which had compelled him to put in practice this method of obtaining her hand. He declared his sincerity towards her with the greatest earnestness, and protested that his existence would be a burden to him too intolerable to be born, without the possession of Adeline. Nothing, he continued, but the despair of  
gaining

gaining her free consent to become his wife, could ever have led him to treat so unworthily a woman whom he idolized. "The whole of my future life, my respected Adeline, shall be passed in unremitting endeavours to promote your happiness."

Adeline, whose head was reclined upon the shoulders of Agatha, who stood near her, raised her eyes towards the altar, exclaiming; "Oh, Holy Virgin, protect me!" a moment after, she added, "Ah, my Julien, where art thou in this terrible moment?"

Beauval, who had now no dread before him of Madame de Villeverde's discoveries, replied, "Julien is become a Knight of Malta, and consequently can never be your husband."

Adeline replied not, but regarded him with a fixed and mournful look. Tho' she doubted

doubted the latter part of the Baron's information, yet the bare possibility of its having taken place, gave her inexpressible pain.

Beauval solemnly assured her that what he had told her was true ; and then, finding that Valini did not arrive, he began to give Adeline a detail of every thing which had transpired respecting Julien. When he ceased speaking,

Adeline finding means to disengage her hands from those of the Baron, clasped them together, and cried, in a voice of agony, " I am then lost indeed ! Oh, my " Lord, with Julien, I have lost all that " rendered life desirable !"

Beauval could not behold the tears and distress of so lovely an object without being affected ; he was almost inclined to grant her a present respite, and allow her to return

turn to her apartment ; when Valini, her bosom covered with blood, which had dropped also upon several parts of her white dress; her countenance pale and ghastly, and brandishing a dagger in her right hand, entered the chapel, and hurried towards the altar.

The men who were standing in a line across the aisle, gave way at her approach. Amazement was strongly marked in her countenance, and it seemed to be redoubled, when she beheld the situation of Adeline and Beauval, the altar, the priest, and every preparation for a marriage.

Casting a glance of scorn upon Adeline, whom, from seeing in this situation at midnight, she took for a finished hypocrite, and addressing Beauval,

“ Monster,” she wildly exclaimed, “ you  
“ have suborned a villain to murder me, de-  
“ serted



"serted as I am by that ungrateful girl.

"But I have revenged myself," cried she, her eyes sparkling with frenzy, "by the death of the assassin." Oh heaven!" she added, in an exhausted tone, "forgive us both!"

Adeline, greatly shocked both at Valini's appearance, and the suspicion which it was plain she entertained of her, fainted in the arms of Agatha. Valini herself, weakened by loss of blood, staggered, and was falling, but Beauval supported her, and seating her upon the steps of the altar, gave her in charge to Gertrude, who now entered the chapel.

The unhappy Valini had risen in her sleep, and having passed through the press, was wandering about the adjoining apartments. It was Valini, who had been seen by the Baron and Gertrude. From thence she had entered the chamber which had been occupied by Reginald, where she had  
thrown

thrown her self upon the bed and slept for some time, when she again rose and was leaving that chamber to return to her own, when the Jew, who had waited in the Baron's anti-chamber, and concluded it was Augustin returning to bed, determined to seize that moment, to prevent his ever being witness against him in this world. The Baron, he concluded, would pass the night with Adeline, and therefore would know nothing of the assassination before the morning, when it would be difficult to discover the perpetrator.

In answer to the suggestions of his conscience, some feeble remains of which he yet possessed, the Jew reflected that the sacrifice of this old Priest was absolutely necessary to his own safety, or at least to his interest, which was, with him, equivalent. Hardened as he was in villany, he drew forth the dagger with a trembling hand, and softly following the person whom he

took

took for Augustin, he suddenly stepped before, and aiming a blow, which he hoped would be effectual, he stabbed Valini in the side. Roused by the extreme pain of the blow, the unhappy Italian by a natural impulse snatched at the dagger, and plunged it instantaneously into the heart of the assassin who fell without a groan.

Valini's, whose imagination was occupied with the scene in which she really was placed, was surprised at nothing but her wound; that surprise, however, hindered her from returning to her own apartment by the way she came, and she hurried down the great stairs across the hall, towards a light which proceeded from the chapel, where one of the doors stood a little way open.

Adeline now beginning to recover, the Baron, returned to assist Valini, protesting to her that he was altogether innocent of the

the atrocious attempt that had been made upon her life ; and would not fail to punish the villain who had been so daringly guilty.

“ He is already punished, my Lord,” said Gertrude, in tears ; “ I have lost my “ my husband ; the Jew is dead.”

Nothing could have been more agreeable to Beauval ; he could scarcely contain his joy, which however was in a moment exchanged for a much less agreeable sensation.

“ Jesu, pardon him !” said Valini, “ and “ in mercy receive his soul and mine. My “ Lord,” cried she, seeing Beauval return to Adeline, “ hear me while I can yet speak “ You have wrongly suspected your wife “ Rohesia was most virtuous ; Reginald was “ guilty with me only.”

The Baron, terrified at this information



was fixed to the place where he stood, ejaculating, "Accursed fiend, you have then destroyed"—

"Spare your curses, and hear me ere I die," said Valini, interrupting him. "I," proceeded she, "was the page Marco, whose beauty you have often so warmly praised, and whom you cannot but remember. I prostituted myself to him, in place of Rohesia, a diabolical deed, transacted in darkness, silence, and secrecy."

Valini pronounced these last words with an emphasis utterly horrible; but making a quick transition from her crimes to her repentance, she so pathetically besought the Baron's forgiveness, and that of Adeline for having separated her from her lover, of which she had long suspected herself of having been the original cause; that both the Baron and Adeline melted into tears, and the latter strove to comfort Valini, and inspire her with hopes of life.

But

But the Baron's were tears of despair. "Ah, Madam," said he, in a low and broken voice, "how many crimes does one deviation from virtue occasion. You have been the cause of Rohesia's death, and you see in me her actual murderer!"

Adeline and the two females started with horror, and Valini, faintly shrieking, sunk down, her head falling against the rails of the altar. Adeline, placing herself beside her, reclined it upon her bosom.

At that moment the doors at the lower end of the hall were thrown open, and the Baroness and her son entered, followed by the Count di Rozarno and Ludovico. The porter, who slept in the gateway chamber, knowing the voice of Julien, had joyfully admitted him and Rohesia; and surprised at seeing a light in the chapel at such an hour, they had repaired thither.

The sickl

The porter set open the folding doors, and the Baroness, covered with a veil, was led in by her son.

Beauval's countenance was clouded with anger when he beheld Julien; but Adeline overjoyed at this unexpected and to her most happy meeting, sprung forward to clasp her long lost lover. The Baron endeavoured to disengage her from his son, but Adeline, recollecting the alarming situation from which his arrival had relieved her, refused to quit him, exclaiming, "No, no, we will part no more."

The Baron, seeing himself beckoned to by the strange Lady, left Adeline for a moment, and approached the former.

The Lady retreated, and led the way to a distant part of the hall, where the porter had just fixed a lamp, which gave a pale and sickly light, that hardly extended beyond the

the base of the pillar on which it was placed. When Rohesia had reached this light, she turned suddenly upon her husband, who followed her, and lifting up her veil, discovered to the amazed, terrified Beauval, the individual countenance of his murdered wife.

The light of the lamp fell directly upon her face; the Baron saw the countenance distinctly, pale and emaciated as it was by the lateness of the hour and the length of the journey. Rohesia essayed to embrace him; but the Baron, uttering a loud cry, ran precipitately from her in a state of terror, and rushing into the chapel, he seized Valini's dagger, which lay by her upon the pavement, exclaiming, "She is come, she is come, to summon us away." Julien who observed him caught his arm, and broke the force of the blow, but not before his father had severely wounded himself.

"Rash



"Rash man," said Valini, faintly; "I alone am guilty."

"'Tis false," cried the Baron; "I poisoned her with my own hands."

"Oh, my Lord, my dear Lord!" exclaimed Rohesia, casting her arms about his neck, "live, live, for my sake; and, Madame Valini, I forgive you both. You, my poor Beauval, said she, embracing the Baron, "have been cruelly, cruelly deceived!"

Beauval scarce heard her; his life seemed to be ebbing fast, his head dropped upon Rohesia's shoulders, and he sunk between her feeble arms down at her feet.

The fainting Valini was supported by her brother Rozarno and Ludovico. She besought her brother to forgive her in death.

for the dishonour which she had brought upon their family.

“ Oh, my sister, my Valeria, my beloved Valeria !” cried the Count, “ talk not of forgiveness ; but live for your brother, who loves you with the utmost tenderness.”

And Ludovico, pressing her cold hands between his, called upon her to behold and bless her son before she expired.

Adeline, whom Julien had quitted to support his wounded parent, clasping the rails of the altar, beheld the tragical scene with agonizing earnestness.

Augustin, whom this momentary succession of amazing circumstances had overwhelmed with consternation, feebly moved towards the attendants of Rohesia and Ro  
zarc

zarno, (for the wicked instruments of Beauval had escaped) and besought them to assist in conveying the Baron to his apartment.

Old Cicely, now entering the chapel at the head of the servants of the château, hung about the Baroness, blessing every Saint to see her alive again. Julien ordered her to conduct his mother to her own apartment. Rohesia, alarmed at the fatal consequences of her indiscretion in so suddenly revealing herself, was carried to her chamber.

And Adeline, holding the hand of Valini, who was born by Rozarno and Ludovico, followed Gertrude to the chambers in which they had been imprisoned.

## CHAP. XVII.

"O Hero! what an Angel had'st thou been,  
"If half thy outward Graces had been plac'd  
"About the Thoughts and Councils of thy Heart."

**A** SURGEON who examined the wound of the unfortunate Valini, declared that it was impossible she could live many hours. Of Beauval's recovery he entertained hopes, but ordered that he should be kept perfectly quiet.

Julien, cheered by these hopes, went to attend upon his mother. Rohesia, by the care of old Cicely, was revived, and anxiously waiting for news of her husband, whom, though she had heard him confess his



his attempt upon her life, she still loved, and earnestly hoped to pass the remainder of her days in a happy re-union with him. Julien, now impatient to be with Adeline, reminded his mother of the dying Valini; and the Baroness, ever humane and compassionate, went with her on to the chamber of the expiring penitent.

The unfortunate victim of youthful desires was raised in her bed upon pillows, leaning upon the bosom of Adeline; parts of her white dress stained with blood were scattered about the carpet. Adeline had cleansed her face and bosom from the gore; and her fine hair altogether unconfined flowed upon her shoulders, and shaded her countenance, inexpressibly lovely even in death. Augustin held a crucifix before her. Ludovico in tears was receiving her dying blessing; and Rozarno in silent sorrow upon his knees near the side of the bed.

G 3 " Oh

"Oh, my son!" said Valini, throwing one of her feeble arms around the neck of Ludovico, "Oh, my son! if Heaven had spared me but a few years with my child! but I have ill deserved its blessings," added she, in a suppressed voice.

"Daughter," said Augustin, in a solemn, but affectionate tone, "do not murmur at the decrees of God."

Poor Valini, recalled immediately to a sense of her situation and her duty, made an effort with her pale and dying lips to kiss an image of her Saviour, which was upon the crucifix; saying, in his own words, "Father thy will be done."

"Sainted and beloved daughter," said Augustin, "trust in the mercies of that dear Saviour; his angels will receive you among them, and your blessing shall remain upon your child."

“I

“I do trust,” said Valini, with firmness, while the wonted fire of her fine eyes seemed to sparkle again for a moment; and turning to Adeline, said, in her usual manner of expressing herself, “Child of my soul, “adieu! to your care I recommend my “poor maidens at Villeverde; in you they “will have a kind protectress; you will find “my will in my cabinet. I have endowed “their house with my whole estate, for “then I thought not that I had still a child “to inherit it; but Rozarno, my dear brother” —

The Count drew near, while the tears fell fast upon his manly face, and interrupting her, said, “Oh, my Valeria, Ludovico “is mine; do not exhaust yourself, but live, “live, my Valeria for us both.”

“Alas, no!” — said Valini, shivering, “but “I am satisfied” —

The Baroness, who stood at the feet of the bed, concealed by the curtains, had beheld this scene with the deepest emotions of pity. Valini, seeing her come forward, inclined her head, and said, in a low and feeble voice,

“Madam, have the charity to forgive me ;  
“had I known the misfortunes which my  
“conduct has brought upon your house, I  
“would have”—

“Dear Valini,” interrupted the Baroness, seeing her exhausted frame sinking under the exertion of uttering so much. “My  
“dear Valini, I do from my soul forgive  
“you ; and if Heaven will not spare you to  
“our prayers, your Ludovico shall be my  
“Ludovico, and divide my affections with  
“Montalville ; I will love him for his mother’s sake.”



A feeble gleam of joy seemed to overspread the pale features of the dying Italian, and a moment afterwards she sunk back and expired.

Julien supported Adeline to his mother's apartment; and afterwards conducted the Count and Ludovico to his own.

Valini was buried in the convent chapel, of which she was the foundress; and some days after the funeral, Adeline received letters from England, which she immediately communicated to Ludovico, who in consequence of them set out for England with the Count his uncle.

As the Baron de Beauval slowly recovered, the endearing attentions of his amiable wife Rohesia recalled again the true affections which he had formerly born her, which the jealousy Reginald's conduct had

G 5                      occasioned,

occasioned, had first weakened, and at length, converted into fury. The Baroness explained every thing relating to him at different times during her husband's convalescence.

And Beauval, anxious that Adeline should, by becoming the wife of his son, be out of his reach, entreated that their marriage might be deferred no longer. Adeline, however, whose fears of the Baron were now removed by the return of Rohesia, would not consent to celebrate her marriage so immediately after the death of one of her best friends; and it was not until six months after that event, which to Julien appeared twice as many ages, that he was made happy in the possession of his amiable Adeline.

In the mean time, Montalville and his mother, while the Baron slept, usually  
walked

walked to and fro in the gallery, attended by Augustin, recapitulating the various extraordinary circumstances, which, in so short a space of time, had happened in the château, and to themselves.

Upon one of these occasions, Julien related to the Baroness the alarm which he had experienced on the night of Reginald's funeral, when some mysterious person came, and, with a hand colder than ice, touched him in his bed, and whom he had afterwards followed into the vaults of the château.

At the mention of a mysterious person, Augustin laughed heartily.

Julien was surprised at the abruptness of Augustin's mirth, and eagerly enquired the cause of it; Rohesia, equally at a loss to account for it, joined her enqui-

ries to those of Julien for an explanation.

A large old monkey, belonging to Cicely the housekeeper, came at that moment capering into the gallery. Augustin's peal of laughter broke out still louder, and as soon as he recovered the use of speech he pointed out the animal to Julien, crying, "My dear Chevalier, pray make your reverence to the mysterious nocturnal visitor."

"Preposterous!" cried Julien, "it could not have been Jean?"

"Indeed it was him," replied Augustin, "and no other person whatever. On the morning you left the château, Cicely came to me to beg I would go and exorcise the Chevalier's chamber, which was certainly bewitched. Finding I could not reason her out of her fears, I consented  
"to



“ to go with her and examine the apartment.  
“ You know, Chevalier, there is at the  
“ head of the bed a deep nich, at the bottom  
“ of which is a massive piece of carved  
“ work ; while we were examining the bed,  
“ Holy Mary ! cried out Cicely, here is  
“ blood upon the pillows ! she had not done  
“ speaking ere a rueful and bloody counte-  
“ nance appeared in the nich, slowly lifting  
“ its head above the carved work. This  
“ apparition was the individual Monsieur  
“ Singe, who crawling out, came chattering  
“ and moaning towards us. He had fol-  
“ lowed Cicely when, after you fainted in  
“ the vault, she and the other servants  
“ brought you to bed, and finding every  
“ body too much engaged to take any notice  
“ of him, crept under the bed, and went to  
“ sleep. When his nap was concluded he  
“ arose, probably to examine into his situa-  
“ tion, and clambered up the bed in his  
“ way to the place where he usually  
“ sleeps,

“ sleeps, which is near to that of Cicely.  
“ Poor Singe, in this situation, unfortunately  
“ placed his paw upon your hand, from which  
“ he instantly received so unexpected and  
“ painful a blow, that, screaming with fright  
“ and pain, he instantly sprung into the  
“ nich which was just behind, where he  
“ squatted at the bottom, in silent anguish  
“ and dismay, not daring to stir until the  
“ voice of his old protectress Cicely gave  
“ him courage to come forth.

“ The person whom you followed in the  
“ vault was myself. From some expressions  
“ of the Chevalier Reginald before his con-  
“ fession, or rather from the reflections  
“ which they afterwards gave birth to, I en-  
“ tertained a kind of romantic hope that  
“ Madame de Beauval might be still alive ;  
“ these hopes were the parents of a restless  
“ curiosity which seized me, of examining  
“ her coffin, on which I had heard the do  
“ mestics

“mestics make some singular remarks.  
“After the funeral of Reginald, when I  
“thought every body asleep, I left my  
“chamber in order to make this scrutiny,  
“resolving if I should find the body of the  
“Baroness really interred in the coffin, never  
“to confess the impertinent curiosity of  
“having examined it; but if, on the con-  
“trary, Lady Rohesia should have been spi-  
“rited away, to hasten to you with infor-  
“mation of so important a discovery.

“As I passed through the passage at the  
“end of the servants’ hall, I overheard  
“them, whom I thought long before to  
“have been in bed, talking of Reginald,  
“and in a hollow tone calculated to inti-  
“midate them, I commanded them to men-  
“tion his name no more. From thence I  
“went up the principal stair case into the  
“great gallery, and stood a little time before  
“a painting of the dead Chevalier, in order  
“to

“ to fasten my little lanthorn to my girdle  
“ before I entered the narrow stair case  
“ among the pillars, where the descent is  
“ difficult, and I should want to make use  
“ of both my hands ; but when I arrived at  
“ the vault, and kneeling down by the Ba-  
“ roness’s coffin in order to unskrew it, I  
“ heard some one near me ; I confess I was  
“ alarmed, and immediately extinguished  
“ my light, lest by being discovered in so  
“ singular a situation, I might draw upon  
“ me the indignation of the Baron. Having  
“ waited a few minutes, and hearing no  
“ more noise, I left the vaults. Your de-  
“ parture from the château took place on  
“ the following morning, and I never after  
“ felt myself sufficiently determined to re-  
“ peat my attempt. You mentioned nothing  
“ to me of what you had seen in the vault,  
“ and as I could no way account for my  
“ being interrupted at the very instant when  
“ I was about to open the coffin, unwilling  
“ as



“as I was to attribute my alarm to any  
“thing supernatural, I yet felt an unwill-  
“lingness to repeat the attempt unaccom-  
“panied, and resolved to postpone it until  
“your return, and then descend again  
“among the vaults, in case I found you ap-  
“proved it, and were willing to accompany  
“me.”

Ludovico, upon his arrival in England, was informed by Lord Petersvale of the death of Mrs. Dormer; that Lady on her death bed had sent for Julia Fitzhubert, who obeyed her summons, attended by Lord Petersvale. Mrs. Dormer confessed to them, that she had secreted the last will of her husband, and only produced a former one; she now however delivered to Julia and Lord Petersvale the true will, by which it appeared, that Mr. Dormer had left his whole fortune to Ludovico, subject to an annuity of fifteen hundred pounds for the life

life of Mrs. Dormer, and upon condition that he assumed his name Mrs. Dormer died, and Ludovico, out of respect, put on mourning for six months, during which a naturalization bill was passed for him, and he afterwards received the dignity of a Baronet. To compleat his happiness, he also obtained, with the full consent of her friends, the hand of the generous Julia, who had loved and befriended him in his adversity, and she shortly afterwards became the pride and delight of his grateful and affectionate heart, in the character of Lady Dormer.

During these arrangements, Adeline had passed over to England to await Lady Petersvale's recovery ; and the Count di Rozarno, who had lost Valeria, and was now about to lose Sir Lewis Dormer by his marriage with Julia, saw in the mother of Adeline, a woman whom he had long admired, but whose severe, yet elegant raillery had wished

sometimes made him fear ; and he often wished that she resembled her beautiful daughter as much in gentleness of mind, as she certainly did in grace of person.

The Count, who was, as most Italians are, naturally grave, usually attended Lady Petersvale, whose indispositions had a little repressed her usual vivacity.

The Count was one day bitterly lamenting to Lady Petersvale, that his sister had been snatched from him at the every moment he had discovered her ; and that his nephew, who had a large estate and a wife in England, would not now return with him into Italy ; and that he was again left the same solitary being, that had so long wandered about the world, to whom every body was indifferent."

" My poor Count," said her Ladyship, in a bantering tone, " believe me, whatever  
" coxcombs

“coxcombs may say to the contrary, no  
“man can be happy without a wife. It is  
“very true, that ill sorted alliances are pro-  
“ductive of misery, but I even doubt,”  
added she, laughing, “whether that kind  
“of misery is not preferable to the restless  
“insipidity of a single state. Public pa-  
“rade and amusements, dissipation, and  
“even variety itself, at length palls upon  
“the senses; and it is only in domestic  
“avocations, and amidst the smiles of an  
“affectionate family, that real pleasure fixes  
“her abode.”

“Signora,” began Rozarno.

“Hold your tongue,” interrupted Ermin-  
guard; and taking his hand she put it into  
that of Lady Villeverde, who had been ap-  
proaching them during this conversation.  
“There,” added she, “take him my Lady!  
“the poor fellow is dying to declare himself,  
“but



“but his modesty and Italian taciturnity  
“will make him put it off until the declara-  
“tion will be useless.”

Madame de Villeverde, who had long re-  
garded Rozarno with a favourable eye, was  
agreeable surprised.

“But,” continued Lady Petersvale,  
“now I have made proposals on both sides,  
“I expect you will immediately ratify them  
“in my presence.”

Rozarno accordingly offered himself in  
form; and Isabelle, assuming a suitable  
confusion, in due form accepted him.

